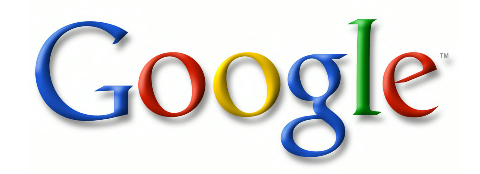
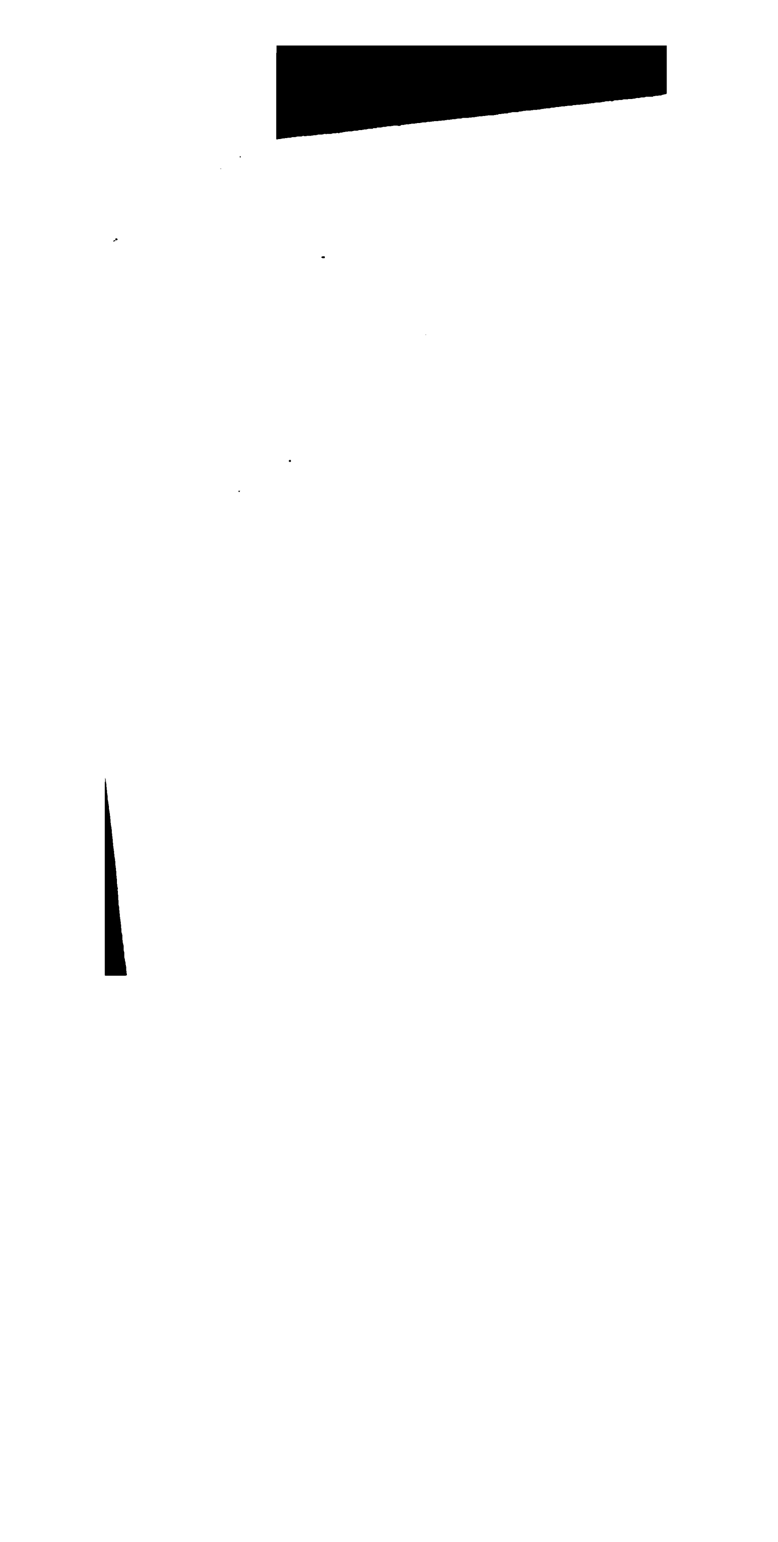




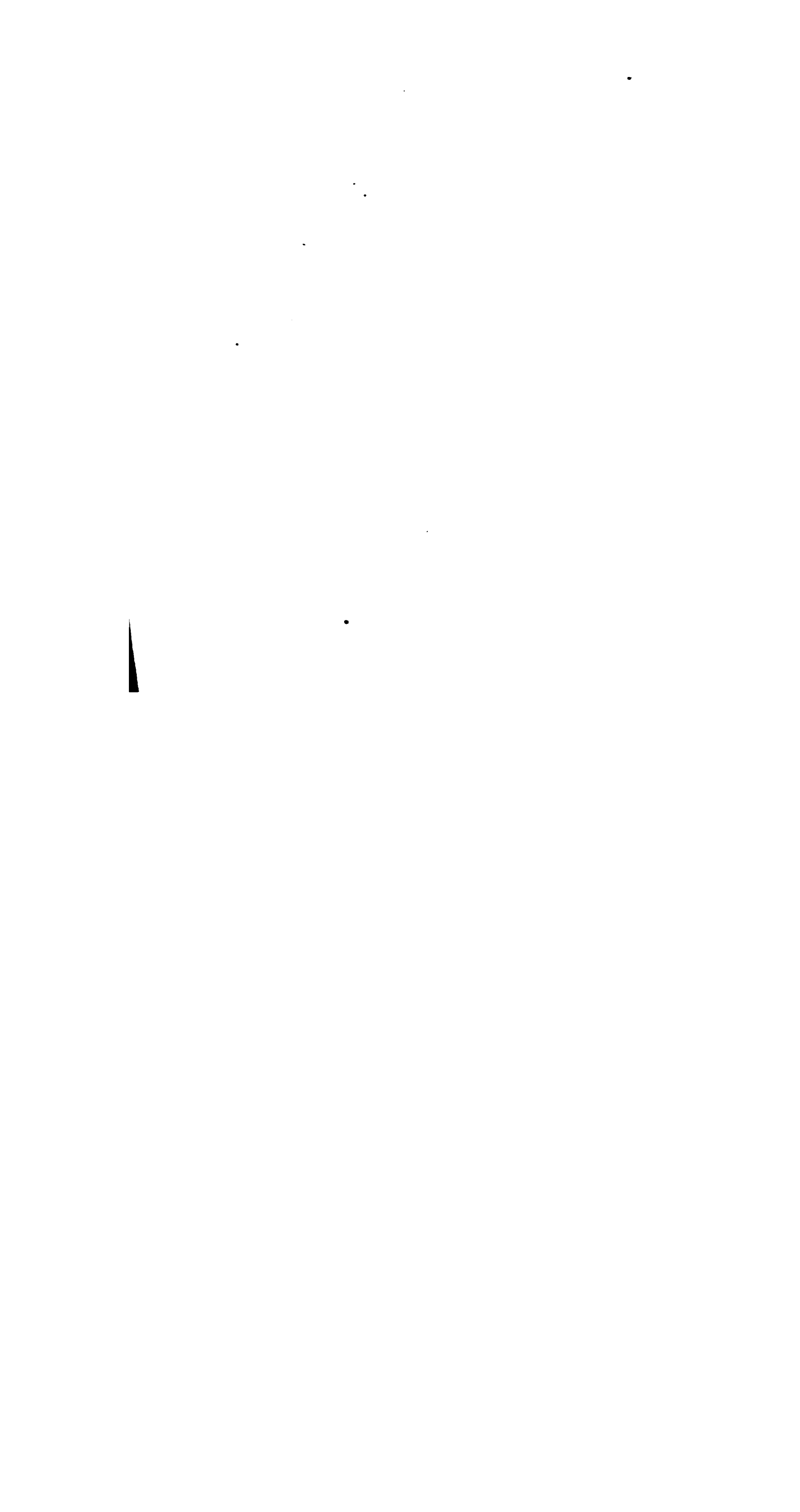






THE STUDENT.

VOL. I.



THE STUDENT

A SERIES OF PAPERS,

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"EUGENE ARAM," "ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH,"

&c. &c.

Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer Lytton

"The situation of the most enchanted enthusiast is preferable to that of a philosopher who, from continual apprehensions of being mistaken, at length dares neither affirm nor deny any thing."

WIELAND'S AGATHON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Third Edition.

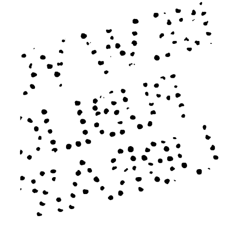
LONDON:

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1836.



LONDON:
ON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVC



TO

MY ESTEEMED AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

COLONEL D'AGUILAR,

&c. &c.

I DEDICATE THESE VOLUMES,

E. L. BULWER.

Hertford Street, April 20, 1835.

PREFACE.

I PRESENT these volumes to the reader with considerable diffidence, and with the full consciousness that they need an apology. A series of papers which I published some time since in the New Monthly Magazine, under the title of "Conversations with an Ambitious Student," attracted much favourable attention; and I have been often earnestly requested to collect and republish them. I postponed, however, doing so, from time to time, in the impression that their grave and serious character was not likely to command an attentive audience with

the many, at all commensurate with the exaggerated and enthusiastic estimate already conceived of their value by the few. At length, deciding to publish certain Essays and Tales, I found that their general train of thought was so much in harmony with the Conversations referred to, that I resolved to incorporate the latter, (corrected, somewhat enlarged, and under the altered denomination of "The New Phædo,")—leaving them at the end of the collection—to be read or avoided, as the inclination of the reader may prompt him;—a sort of supplementary walk in the enclosure, at which he may stop short, or through which he may pursue his wanderings, in proportion as the preliminary excursion may have allured or fatigued him.

Of the general nature both of these Con versations and the various papers which pre cede them, (some of which have also appea before,) I should observe that they bel rather to the poetical than the logical pl

sophy—that, for the most part, they address the sentiment rather than the intellect—choosing for their materials the metaphysics of the heart and the passions, which are more often employed in the Fiction than the Essay. If the title were not a little equivocal and somewhat presumptuous, I should venture to entitle them "Minor Prose Poems:" they utter in prose, what are the ordinary didactics of poetry. I allow that they must therefore be taken *cum grano*—that they assert rather than prove, and that they address themselves more to those prepared to agree with the views they embrace, than to those whom it would be necessary to convert. This is yet more the case, perhaps, with the Essays than the Tales, in which latter the moral is often more homely—more addressed to the experience of the reason, and less constructed from the subtleties and refinements of the feelings. The Tales, in short, partake as much of the nature of the essay as the Essays themselves—availing themselves of a dramatic shape,

the more earnestly and the less tediously to inculcate truths.

Although some of the contents of these volumes have appeared before, I yet trust that the component parts have been so selected and arranged as to form a tolerably symmetrical whole — each tending to maintain an unity of purpose, and to illustrate one general vein of ethical sentiment and belief.—Nay, from my desire to effect this the more completely, I fear that I may occasionally have incurred the charge of repetition and tautology—although, perhaps, the fault was unavoidable, and it was necessary to repeat the deduction of one Essay in the problems contended for in another.

Perhaps I may hereafter, (when I have com pleted an historical work, in which I am no and at different intervals, have, for years, b engaged,)—add to these volumes, by some pa of a more solid and demonstrative chara divided into two additional series—the one

certain topics of the Ancient Learning, the other upon Politics and Commerce. It was with this intention that I adopted the present title, which, if my plan be completed, will be more elaborately borne out than it is by these volumes, regarded as a single publication.

I repeat that it is with the most unaffected diffidence, that after mature deliberation and long delay, I decide upon committing these papers to the judgment of the Public. I am fully aware that they are trifles in themselves, and that miscellanies of this nature are liable to be considered even more trifling than they are—still they convey some thoughts, and some feelings which I wished not to have experienced without result; and the experience by which an individual believes he has profited is rarely communicated without some benefit, however humble, to the world.

ON THE

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AND

THE IMPRESSION CONVEYED OF THEM BY THEIR WORKS.

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This is one of those subtle and delicate subjects which Literary philosophers have not taken the trouble to discuss; it is one which is linked with two popular errors. The first error is in the assertion that Authors are different from the idea of them which their writings tend to convey; and the second error is in the expectation that nevertheless Authors ought to be exactly what their readers

In these lines — shrewd and worldly to the very marrow—are depicted the tricks which Chiefs have ever been taught to play, but which Literary Men (Chiefs of a different order) have not learned to perform. Hence their simplicity,—hence the vulgar disappointment. No man was disappointed with the late Lord Londonderry, but many were with Walter Scott; none with Charles X.—many with Paul Courier; none with the late Archbishop of * * * *—many with Wordsworth. Massillon preserved in the court the impression he had made in the pulpit: he dressed alike his melodious style and his handsome person to the best advantage. Massillon was a good man, but he was a quack; it was his vocation,—for he was also a good courtier.

This, then, is the difference between the great men of letters and the great men of courts: the former generally disappoint the vulgar — the latter do not; because the one are bred up in the arts that hide defects and dazzle the herd, and

the other know nothing but knowledge, and are skilled in no arts save those of composition. It follows, then, that the feeling of disappointment is usually a sign of a weak mind in him who experiences it,—a foolish, apprentice-sort of disposition, that judges of everything great by the criterion of a puppet-show, and expects as much out of the common way in a celebrated Author as in the Lord Mayor's coach. I hear, therefore, the common cry, that a great man does not answer expectation, with a certain distrustful scorn of the persons who utter it. What right have they to judge of the matter at all? Send them to see Gog and Magog; they will not be disappointed with *that* sight. Is it not, in fact, a great presumption in the petty herd of idlers to express an opinion of the man, when they can scarcely do so of his works, which are but a part of him? Men who knew not, nor could have known, a line in the Principia, thought themselves perfectly at liberty to say that Sir Isaac Newton was quite a different man from what might have been expected. There is

scarcely a good critic of books born in an age, and yet every fool thinks himself justified in criticising persons. "There are some people," said Necker, in one of his fragments, "who talk of *our* Pascal—*our* Corneille. I am thunderstruck at their familiarity!"

In real truth, I believe that there is much less difference between the author and his works than is currently supposed; it is usually in the *physical appearance* of the writer,—his manners—his mien—his exterior,—that he falls short of the ideal a reasonable man forms of him—rarely in his mind. A man is, I suspect, but of a second-rate order whose genius is not immeasurably above his works,—who does not feel within him an inexhaustible affluence of thoughts—feelings—inventions—which he will never have leisure to embody in print. He will die, and leave only a thousandth part of his wealth to Posterity, which is his Heir. I believe this to be true even of persons, like La Fontaine, who succeed only in a particular line; men seemingly of one idea

shining through an atmosphere of simplicity—the Monomaniacs of Genius. But it is doubly true of the mass of great Authors who are mostly various, accomplished, and all-attempting: such men never can perfect their own numberless conceptions.

It is, then, in the physical or conventional, not the mental qualities, that an Author usually falls short of our ideal: this is a point worthy to be fixed in the recollection. Any of my readers who have studied the biography of men of letters will allow my assertion is borne out by facts; and, at this moment, I am quite sure that numbers, even of both sexes, have lost a portion of interest for the genius of Byron on reading in Lady Blessington's Journal that he wore a nankin jacket and green spectacles. Of such a nature are such disappointments. No! in the mind of a man there is always a resemblance to his works. His heroes may not be like himself, but they are like certain qualities, which belong to him. The sentiments he utters are his at the moment;—if you find them predominate in all

his works, they predominate in his mind: if they are advanced in one, but contradicted in another, they still resemble their Author, and betray the want of depth or of resolution in his mind. His works alone make not up a man's character, but they are the index to that living book.

Every one knows how well Voltaire refuted the assertion of J. Baptiste Rousseau that goodness and talent must exist together. The learned Strabo, holding the same error as Baptiste Rousseau, says (lib. i.) that there cannot be "a good poet who is not first a good man." This is a paradox, and yet it is not *far* from the truth: a good poet may not be a good man, but he must have certain good dispositions. Above all, that disposition which sympathises with noble sentiments—with lofty actions—with the Beauty of the Mind as of the Earth. This may not suffice to make him a good man—its influence may be counteracted a hundred ways in life, but it is not counteracted in his compositions. *There* the better portion of his Intellect awakes—there he gives vent to enthusiasm, and

enthusiasm to generous and warm emotions. Sterne may have been harsh to his wife, but his heart was tender at the moment he wrote of Maria. Harshness of conduct is not a contradiction of extreme susceptibility to sentiment in writing. The latter may be perfectly sincere, as the former may be perfectly indefensible; in fact, the one may be a consequence, not a contradiction, of the other. The craving after the Ideal, which belongs to Sentiment, makes its possessor discontented with the mortals around him, and the very overfineness of nerve that quickens his feelings sharpens also his irritability. For my own part, so far from being surprised to hear that Sterne was a peevish and angry man, I should have presumed it at once from the overwrought fibre of his graver compositions. This contrast between softness in emotion, and callousness in conduct, is not peculiar to poets. Nero was womanishly affected by the harp; and we are told by Plutarch, that Alexander Pheræus, who was one of the sternest of tyrants, shed a torrent of tears upon the act-

ing of a play. So that he who had furnished the most matter for tragedies was most affected by the pathos of a tragedy!

But who shall say that *the feelings* which produced such emotions even in such men were not laudable and good? Who that has stood in the dark caverns of the Human Heart, shall dare to scoff at the contrast of act and sentiment, instead of lamenting it? Such scoffers are the Shallows of Wit—their very cleverness proves their superficiality. There are various dark feelings within us which do not *destroy*, but which, when roused, *overwhelm* for the time the feelings which are good—to which last, occupied in literature, or in purely mental emotions, we are sensible alone, and unalloyed. Of our evil feelings, there is one in especial which is the usual characteristic of morbid literary men, though, hitherto, it has escaped notice as such, and which is the cause of many of the worst faults to be found both in the Author and the Tyrant: this feeling is *Suspicion:* and I think I am justified in calling it the charac-

teristic of morbid literary men. Their quick susceptibilities make them over-sensible of injury,—they exaggerate the enmities they have awakened — the slanders they have incurred. They are ever fearful of a trap: nor this in literature alone. Knowing that they are not adepts in the world's common business, they are perpetually afraid of *being taken in;* and, feeling their various peculiarities, they are often equally afraid of being ridiculed. Thus Suspicion, in all ways and all shapes, besets them; this makes them now afraid to be generous, and now to be kind; and acting upon a soil that easily receives, but rarely loses an impression —that melancholy vice soon obdurates and encrusts the whole conduct of the *acting* man. But in literary composition it sleeps. The *thinking* man then hath no enemy at his desk, —no hungry trader at his elbow—no grinning spy on his uncouth gestures. His soul is young again — he is what he embodies, — and the feelings, checked in the real world, obtain their vent in the imaginary. It was the

Good Natural, to borrow a phrase from the French, that spoke in the erring Rousseau, when he dwelt on the loveliness of Virtue. It was the Good Natural that stirred in the mind of Alexander Pheræus when he wept at the mimic sorrows subjected to his gaze. When the time for action and for the real world arrived to either, it roused other passions, and Suspicion made the Author no less a wretch than it made the Tyrant.

Thus the tenderest sentiments may be accompanied with cruel actions, and yet the solution of the enigma be easy to the inquirer; and thus, though the *life* of an Author does not correspond with his works, his *nature* may.

But this view is the most partial of all,—and I have, therefore, considered it the first. How few instances there are, after all, of even that *seeming* discrepitude, which I have just touched upon, between the Author's conduct and his books; in most they chime together — and all the notes from the mighty instrument are in concord! Look at the life of Schiller,

how completely his works assimilate with his restless, questioning, and daring genius: the animation of Fiesco—the solemnity of Wallenstein—are alike emblematic of his character. His sentiments are the echo to his life. Walter Scott and Cobbett—what a contrast! Could Cobbett's life have been that of Scott—or Scott's character that of Cobbett? You may read the character of the Authors in their several Works, as if the works were meant to be autobiographies. Warburton!—what an illustration of the proud and bitter Bishop, in his proud and bitter Books! Sir Philip Sidney* is the Arcadia put into action;—the wise and benevolent Fénelon;—the sententious and fiery Corneille;—the dreaming and scarce intelligible Shelley;—the pompous vigour of Johnson, with his prejudice and his sense—his jealousies and his charity—his habitual magniloquence in nothings—and his gloomy independence of mind, yet low-born ve-

* "Poetry put into action" is the fine saying of Campbell in respect to Sidney's life;—true, but the poetry of the Arcadia.

neration for rank;—Johnson is no less visible in the Rambler, the Rasselas, the Lives of the Poets, the Taxation no Tyranny, than in his large chair at Mrs. Thrale's—his lonely chamber in the dark court out of Fleet-street—or his leonine unbendings with the canicular soul of Boswell. How in the playfulness and the depth—the eccentricity and the solid sense—the ubiquitous sympathy with the larger mass of men—the absence of almost all sympathy with their smaller knots and closer ties,—how in those features, which characterise the pages of Bentham, you behold the wise, singular, benevolent, and passionless old man! I might go on enumerating these instances for ever:—Dante, Petrarch, Voltaire, rush on my memory as I write,—but to name them is enough to remind the reader that if he would learn their characters he has only to read their works. I have been much pleased in tracing the life of Paul Louis Courier, the most brilliant political writer France ever possessed—to see how singularly it is in keeping with the character of his writings. Talking

the other day at Paris with some of his friends, they expressed themselves astonished at my accurate notions of his character—"You must have known him," they said. "No;—but I know his works." When he was in the army in Italy, he did not distinguish himself by bravery in his profession of Soldier, but by bravery in his pursuits as an Antiquarian! perfectly careless of danger, he pursued his own independent line of occupation—sympathizing with none of the objects of others—untouched by the vulgar ambition—wandering alone over the remains of old—falling a hundred times into the hands of the *brigands*, and a hundred times extricating himself by his address, and continuing the same pursuits with the same nonchalance. In all this you see the identical character which, in his writings, views with a gay contempt the ambition and schemes of others—which sneers alike at the Bourbon and the Buonaparte—which, careless of subordination, rather than braving persecution, pursues with a gallant indifference its own singular and independent career.

A critic, commenting on writings that have acquired some popularity, observed, that they contained two views of life contradictory of each other,—the one inclining to the Ideal and Lofty—the other to the Worldly and Cynical. The critic remarked, that "this might arise from the Author having two separate characters,—a circumstance less uncommon than the world supposed." There is great depth in the critic's observation. An Author usually *has* two characters,—the one belonging to his Imagination—the other to his Experience. From the one come all his higher embodyings: by the help of the one he elevates—he refines;—from the other come his beings of "the earth, earthy," and his aphorisms of worldly caution. From the one broke—bright yet scarce distinct—the Rebecca of Ivanhoe,—from the other rose, shrewd and selfish, the Andrew Fairservice of Rob Roy. The original of the first need never to have existed—her elements belonged to the Ideal; but the latter was purely the creature of Experience, and either copied from one, or moulded

unconsciously from several, of the actual denizens of the living world. In Shakspeare the same doubleness of character is remarkably visible. The loftiest Ideal is perpetually linked with the most exact copy of the commoners of life. Shakspeare had never seen Miranda—but he had drunk his glass with honest Stephano. Each character embodies a separate view of life—the one (to return to my proposition) the offspring of Imagination, the other of Experience. This complexity of character—which has often puzzled the inquirer—may, I think, thus be easily explained—and the seeming contradiction of the tendency of the work traced home to the conflicting principles in the breast of the Writer. The more an imaginative man sees of the world, the more likely to be prominent is the distinction I have noted.

I cannot leave this subject—though the following remark is an episode from the inquiry indicated by my title—without observing that the characters drawn by Experience—usually the worldly, the plain, and the humorous—stand

necessarily out from the canvass in broader and more startling colours, than those created by the Imagination. Hence superficial critics have often considered the humorous and coarse characters of an author as his best,—forgetful that the very indistinctness of his ideal characters is not only inseparable from the nature of purely imaginary creations, but a proof of the exaltation and intenseness of the imaginative power. The most shadowy and mist-like of all Scott's heroes is the Master of Ravenswood, and yet it is perhaps the highest of his characters in execution as well as conception. Those strong colours and massive outlines, which strike the vulgar gaze as belonging to the best pictures, belong rather to the lower Schools of Art. Let us take a work—the greatest the world possesses in those Schools, and in which the flesh-and-blood vitality of the characters is especially marked—I mean Tom Jones—and compare it with Hamlet. The chief characters in Tom Jones are all plain, visible, eating, drinking, and walking beings; those in Hamlet are shadowy, solemn, and mysterious—

we do not associate them with the ordinary wants and avocations of Earth—they are

> "Lifeless, but lifelike, and awful to sight,
> Like the figures in arras that gloomily glare,
> Stirred by the breath of the midnight air."

But who shall say that the characters in Tom Jones are better drawn than those in Hamlet—or that there is greater skill necessary in the highest walk of the Actual School, than in that of the Imaginative?—Yet there are some persons who, secretly in their hearts, want Hamlet to be as large in the calves as Tom Jones! These are they who blame Lara for being indistinct—that very indistinctness shedding over the poem the sole interest it was capable of receiving. With such critics, Maritornes is a more masterly creation than Undine.

We may observe in Humorous Authors that the faults they chiefly ridicule have often a likeness in themselves. Cervantes had much of the knight-errant in him;—Sir George Etherege was unconsciously the Fopling Flutter of his

own satire;—Goldsmith was the same hero to chambermaids, and coward to ladies, that he has immortalized in his charming comedy;—and the antiquarian frivolities of Jonathan Oldbuck had their resemblance in Jonathan Oldbuck's creator. The pleasure or the pain we derive from our own foibles makes enough of our nature to come off somewhere or other in the impression we stamp of ourselves on Books.

There is—as I think it has been somewhere remarked by a French writer—there is that in our character which never can be seen except in our writings. Yes, all that we have formed from the Ideal—all our noble aspirings—our haunting visions—our dreams of virtue,—all the *celata Venus* which dwells in the lonely Ida of the heart—who could pour forth these delicate mysteries to gross and palpable hearers,—who could utterly unveil to an actual and indifferent spectator the cherished and revered images of years—dim regrets and vague hopes?

In fact, if you told your best friend half what you put upon paper, he would yawn in your

face, or he would think you a fool. Would it have been possible for Rousseau to have gravely communicated to a living being the tearful egotisms of his *Reveries?*—could Shakspeare have uttered the wild confessions of his sonnets to his friends at the "Mermaid?"—should we have any notion of the youthful character of Milton—its lustrous but crystallized purity—if the Comus had been unwritten? *Authors are the only men we ever really* do *know,—the rest of mankind die with only the surface of their character understood.* True, as I have before said, even in an Author, if of large and fertile mind, much of his most sacred self is never to be revealed,—but still we know what species of ore the mine would have produced, though we may not have exhausted its treasure.

Thus, then, to sum up what I have said, so far from there being truth in the vulgar notion, that the character of Authors is belied in their works—their works are, to a diligent inquirer, their clearest and fullest illustration—an appendix to their biography far more valuable and ex-

planatory than the text itself. From this fact we may judge of the beauty and grandeur of the materials of the human mind, although those materials are so often perverted, and their harmony so fearfully marred. It also appears that —despite the real likeness between the book and the man—the vulgar will not fail to be disappointed, because they look to externals;— and the man composed not the book with his face, nor his dress, nor his manners—but with his mind. Hence, then, to proclaim yourself disappointed with the Author is usually to condemn your own accuracy of judgment, and your own secret craving after pantomimic effect. Moreover, it would appear, on looking over these remarks, that there are often two characters to an Author,—the one essentially drawn from the Poetry of life—the other from its Experience; and that hence are to be explained many seeming contradictions and inconsistencies in his works. Lastly, that so far from the book belying the author, unless he had written that book, you—(no, even if you are his nearest

relation, his dearest connexion,—his wife,—his mother)—would never have known the character of his mind.

"Hæ pulcherrimæ effigies et mansuræ."

All biography proves this remarkable fact! Who so astonished as a man's relations when he has exhibited his genius, which is the soul and core of his character? Had Alfieri or Rousseau died at thirty, what would all who had personally known either have told us of them? Would they have given us any, the faintest, notion of their characters? None. A man's mind is betrayed by his talents as much as his virtues. A councillor of a provincial parliament had a brother a mathematician—"How unworthy in my brother,"—cried the councillor,—"the brother of a councillor of the parliament in Bretagne, to sink into a mathematician!" That mathematician was Descartes! What should we know of the character of Descartes, supposing him to have renounced his science, and

his brother (who might fairly be supposed to know his life and character better than any one else) to have written his biography?—A reflection that may teach us how biography in general ought to be estimated.

MONOS AND DAIMONOS.

MONOS AND DAIMONOS.

A LEGEND.

I AM English by birth, but my early years were passed in a foreign and more northern land. I had neither brothers nor sisters; my mother died when I was in the cradle; and I found my sole companion, tutor, and playmate in my father. He was a younger brother of a noble and ancient house: what induced him to forsake his country and his friends, to abjure all society, and to live on a rock, is a story in itself, which has nothing to do with mine.

As the Lord liveth, I believe the tale that I

shall tell you will have sufficient claim on your attention, without calling in the history of another to preface its most exquisite details, or to give interest to its most amusing events. I said my father lived on a rock—the whole country round seemed nothing but rock!—wastes, bleak, blank, dreary; trees stunted, herbage blighted; caverns, through which some black and wild stream (that never knew star or sunlight, but through rare and hideous chasms of the huge stones above it) went dashing and howling on its blessed course; vast cliffs, covered with eternal snows, where the birds of prey lived, and sent, in screams and discordance, a grateful and meet music to the heavens, which seemed too cold and barren to wear even clouds upon their wan, grey, comfortless expanse: these made the characters of that country where the spring of my life sickened itself away. The climate which, in the milder parts of * * * *, relieves the nine months of winter with three months of an abrupt and autumnless summer, never seemed to vary in the gentle and sweet

region in which *my* home was placed. Perhaps, for a brief interval, the snow in the valleys melted, and the streams swelled, and a blue, ghastly, unnatural kind of vegetation, seemed, here and there, to scatter a grim smile over minute particles of the universal rock; but to these witnesses of the changing season were the summers of my boyhood confined. My father was addicted to the sciences—the physical sciences—and possessed but a moderate share of learning in any thing else; he taught me all he knew; and the rest of my education, Nature, in a savage and stern guise, instilled in my heart by silent but deep lessons. She taught my feet to bound, and my arm to smite; she breathed life into my passions, and shed darkness over my temper; she taught me to cling to her, even in her most rugged and unalluring form, and to shrink from all else—from the companionship of man, and the soft smiles of woman, and the shrill voice of childhood; and the ties, and hopes, and socialities, and objects of human existence, as from a torture and a curse. Even in that sullen

rock, and beneath that ungenial sky, I had luxuries unknown to the palled tastes of cities, or to those who woo delight in an air of odours and in a land of roses! What were those luxuries? They had a myriad varieties and shades of enjoyment—they had but a common name. What were those luxuries? *Solitude!*

My father died when I was eighteen; I was transferred to my uncle's protection, and I repaired to London. I arrived there, gaunt and stern, a giant in limbs and strength, and to the tastes of those about me, a savage in bearing and in mood. They would have laughed, but I awed them; they would have altered *me*, but I changed *them*; I threw a damp over their enjoyment and a cloud over their meetings. Though I said little, though I sat with them estranged and silent, and passive, they seemed to wither beneath my presence. Nobody could live with me and be happy, or at ease! I felt it, and I hated them that they could love not me. Three years passed—I was of age—I demanded my fortune—and scorning social life, and pining

once more for loneliness, I resolved to journey to those unpeopled and far lands, which if any have pierced, none have returned to describe. So I took my leave of them all, cousin and aunt —and when I came to my old uncle, who had liked me less than any, I grasped his hand with so friendly a gripe, that, well I ween, the dainty and nice member was thenceforth but little inclined to its ordinary functions.

I commenced my pilgrimage—I pierced the burning sands—I traversed the vast deserts—I came into the enormous woods of Africa, where human step never trod, nor human voice ever startled the thrilling and intense Solemnity that broods over the great solitudes, as it brooded over chaos before the world was! There the primeval nature springs and perishes; undisturbed and unvaried by the convulsions of the surrounding world; the seed becomes the tree, lives through its uncounted ages, falls and moulders, and rots and vanishes; there, the slow Time moves on, unwitnessed in its mighty and mute changes, save by the wandering lion,

or that huge serpent—a hundred times more vast than the puny boa—which travellers have boasted to behold. There, too, as beneath the heavy and dense shade I couched in the scorching noon, I heard the trampling as of an army, and the crush and fall of the strong trees, and saw through the matted boughs the Behemoth pass on its terrible way, with its eyes burning as a sun, and its white teeth arched and glistening in the rabid jaw, as pillars of spar glitter in a cavern; the monster, to whom those wastes only are a home, and who never, since the waters rolled from the Dædal earth, has been given to human gaze and wonder but my own! Seasons glided on, but I counted them not; they were not doled to me by the tokens of man, nor made sick to me by the changes of his base life, and the evidence of his sordid labour. Seasons glided on, and my youth ripened into manhood, and manhood grew grey with the first frost of age; and then a vague and restless spirit fell upon me, and I said in my foolish heart, "I will look upon the countenances of my race once more!"

I retraced my steps—I recrossed the wastes—I re-entered the cities—I took again the garb of man; for I had been hitherto naked in the wilderness, and hair had grown over me as a garment. I repaired to a sea-port, and took ship for England.

In the vessel there was one man, and only one, who neither avoided my companionship nor recoiled at my frown. He was an idle and curious being, full of the frivolities, and egotisms, and importance of those to whom towns are homes, and talk has become a mental aliment. He was one pervading, irritating, offensive tissue of little and low thoughts. The only meanness he had not was fear. It was impossible to awe, to silence, or to shun him. He sought me for ever; he was as a blister to me, which no force could tear away; my soul grew faint when my eyes met him. He was to my sight as those creatures which from their very loathsomeness are fearful as well as despicable to us. I longed and yearned to strangle him when he addressed me! Often I would have laid my hand on him,

and hurled him into the sea to the sharks, which, lynx-eyed and eager-jawed, swam night and day around our ship; but the gaze of many was on us, and I curbed myself, and turned away, and shut my eyes in very sickness; and when I opened them again, lo! he was by my side, and his sharp quick voice grated on my loathing ear! One night I was roused from my sleep by the screams and oaths of men, and I hastened on deck: we had struck upon a rock. It was a ghastly, but, oh Christ! how glorious, a sight! Moonlight still and calm—the sea sleeping in sapphires; and in the midst of the silent and soft repose of all things, three hundred and fifty souls were to perish from the world! I sat apart, and looked on, and aided not. A voice crept like an adder's hiss upon my ear; I turned, and saw my tormentor; the moonlight fell on his face, and it grinned with the maudlin grin of intoxication, and his pale blue eye glistened, and he said, "We will not part even here!" My blood ran coldly through my veins, and I would have thrown him into

the sea, which now came fast and fast upon us; *but the moonlight was on him, and I did not dare to kill him.* But I would not stay to perish with the herd, and I threw myself alone from the vessel and swam towards a rock. I saw a shark dart after me, but I shunned him, and the moment after he had plenty to sate his maw. I heard a crash, and a mingled and wild burst of anguish, the anguish of three hundred and fifty hearts that a minute afterwards were stilled, and I said in my *own* heart, with a deep joy, "*His* voice is with the rest, and we *have* parted!" I gained the shore, and lay down to sleep.

The next morning my eyes opened upon a land more beautiful than a Grecian's dreams. The sun had just risen, and laughed over streams of silver, and trees bending with golden and purple fruits, and the diamond dew sparkled from a sod covered with flowers, whose faintest breath was a delight. Ten thousand birds, with all the hues of a northern rainbow blended in their glorious and glowing wings, rose from turf

and tree, and loaded the air with melody and gladness; the sea, without a vestige of the past destruction upon its glassy brow, murmured at my feet; the heavens, without a cloud, and bathed in a liquid and radiant light, sent their breezes as a blessing to my cheek. I rose with a refreshed and light heart; I traversed the new home I had found; I climbed upon a high mountain, and saw that I was in a small island—it had no trace of man—and my heart swelled as I gazed around and cried aloud in my exultation, "I shall be alone again!" I descended the hill: I had not yet reached its foot, when I saw the figure of a man approaching towards me. I looked at him, and my heart misgave me. He drew nearer, and I saw that my despicable persecutor had escaped the waters, and now stood before me. He came up with his hideous grin, and his twinkling eye; and he flung his arms round me,—I would sooner have felt the slimy folds of the serpent—and said, with his grating and harsh voice, "Ha! ha! my friend, we shall be together still!" I looked at him

with a grim brow, but I said not a word. There was a great cave by the shore, and I walked down and entered it, and the man followed me. "We shall live so happily here," said he; "we will never separate!" And my lip trembled, and my hand clenched of its own accord. It was now noon, and hunger came upon me; I went forth and killed a deer, and I brought it home and broiled part of it on a fire of fragrant wood; and the man ate, and crunched, and laughed, and I wished that the bones had choked him; and he said, when we had done, "We shall have rare cheer here!" But I still held my peace. At last he stretched himself in a corner of the cave and slept. I looked at him, and saw that the slumber was heavy, and I went out and rolled a huge stone to the mouth of the cavern, and took my way to the opposite part of the island; it was my turn to laugh then! I found out another cavern; and I made a bed of moss and of leaves, and I wrought a table of wood, and I looked out from the mouth of the cavern and saw the wide seas before me, and I said, "Now I shall be alone!"

When the next day came, I again went out and caught a kid, and brought it in, and prepared it as before; but I was not hungered, and I could not eat, so I roamed forth and wandered over the island: the sun had nearly set when I returned. I entered the cavern, and sitting on my bed and by my table was that man whom I thought I had left buried alive in the other cave. He laughed when he saw me, and laid down the bone he was gnawing.

"Ha, ha!" said he, "you would have served me a rare trick, but there was a hole in the cave which you did not see, and I got out to seek you. It was not a difficult matter, for the island is so small; and now we *have* met, and we will part no more!"

I said to the man, "Rise, and follow me!" So he rose, and the food he quitted was loathsome in my eyes, for he had touched it. "Shall this thing reap and I sow?" thought I, and my heart felt to me like iron.

I ascended a tall cliff: "Look round," said I; "you see that stream which divides the island; you shall dwell on one side, and I on the other

but the same spot shall not hold us, nor the same feast supply!"

"That may never be!" quoth the man; "for I cannot catch the deer, nor spring upon the mountain kid; and if you feed me not, I shall starve!"

"Are there not fruits," said I, "and birds that you may snare, and fishes which the sea throws up?"

"But I like them not," quoth the man, and laughed, "so well as the flesh of kids and deer!"

"Look, then," said I, "look: by that grey stone, upon the opposite side of the stream, I will lay a deer or a kid daily, so that you may have the food you covet; but if ever you cross the stream and come into my kingdom, so sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will slay you!"

I descended the cliff, and led the man to the side of the stream. "I cannot swim," said he; so I took him on my shoulders and crossed the brook, and I found him out a cave, and I made

him a bed and a table like my own, and left him. When I was on my own side of the stream again, I bounded with joy, and lifted up my voice; "I shall be alone *now!*" said I.

So two days passed, and I *was* alone. On the third I went after my prey; the noon was hot, and I was wearied when I returned. I entered my cavern, and behold the man lay stretched upon my bed. "Ha, ha!" said he, "here I am; I was so lonely at home that I have come to live with you again!"

I frowned on the man with a dark brow, and I said, "So sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will slay you!" I seized him in my arms: I plucked him from my bed; I took him out into the open air, and we stood together on the smooth sand, and by the great sea. A fear came suddenly upon me; I was struck with the awe of the still Spirit which reigns over Solitude. Had a thousand been round us, I would have slain him before them all. I feared now because we were alone in the desert, with Silence and GOD! I relaxed my hold. "Swear,"

I said, "never to molest me again; swear to preserve unpassed the boundary of our several homes, and I will *not* kill you!" "I cannot swear," answered the man; "I would sooner die than forswear the blessed human face—even though that face be my enemy's!"

At these words my rage returned; I dashed the man to the ground, and I put my foot upon his breast, and my hand upon his neck, and he struggled for a moment—and was dead! I was startled; and as I looked upon his face I thought it seemed to revive; I thought the cold blue eye fixed upon me, and the vile grin returned to the livid mouth, and the hands which in the death-pang had grasped the sand, stretched themselves out to me. So I stamped on the breast again, and I dug a hole in the shore, and I buried the body. "And now," said I, "I am alone at last!" And then *the* TRUE *sense of loneliness*, the vague, comfortless, objectless sense of desolation passed into me. And I shook—shook in every limb of my giant frame, as if I had been a child that trembles in the

dark; and my hair rose, and my blood crept, and I would not have stayed in that spot a moment more if I had been made young again for it. I turned away and fled—fled round the whole island; and gnashed my teeth when I came to the sea, and longed to be cast into some illimitable desert, that I might flee on for ever. At sunset I returned to my cave—I sat myself down on one corner of the bed, and covered my face with my hands—I thought I heard a noise; I raised my eyes, and, as I live, I saw on the other end of the bed the man whom I had slain and buried. There he sat, six feet from me, and nodded to me, and looked at me with his wan eyes, and laughed. I rushed from the cave —I entered a wood—I threw myself down—there opposite to me, six feet from my face, was the face of that man again! And my courage rose, and I spoke, but he answered not. I attempted to seize him, he glided from my grasp, and was still opposite, six feet from me as before. I flung myself on the ground, and pressed my face to the sod, and would not look up till

the night came on and darkness was over the earth. I then rose and returned to the cave; I lay down on my bed, and the man lay down by me; and I frowned and tried to seize him as before, but I could not, and I closed my eyes, *and the man lay by me.* Day followed day and it was the same. At board, at bed, at home and abroad, in my uprising and my down-sitting, by day and at night, there, by my bed-side, six feet from me, and no more, was that ghastly and dead thing. And I said, as I looked upon the beautiful land and the still heavens, and then turned to that fearful comrade, "I shall never be alone again!" And the man laughed.

At last a ship came, and I hailed it—it took me up, and I thought, as I put my foot upon the deck, "I shall escape from my tormentor!" As I thought so, I saw him climb the deck too, and I strove to push him down into the sea, but in vain; he was by my side, *and he fed and slept with me as before!* I came home to my native land! I forced myself into crowds—I went to the feast, and I heard music—and I

made thirty men sit with me, and watch by day and by night. So I had thirty-*one* companions, and one was more social than all the rest.

At last I said to myself, "This is a delusion, and a cheat of the external senses, and the thing is *not*, save in my mind. I will consult those skilled in such disorders, and I will be—*alone again!*"

I summoned one celebrated in purging from the mind's eye its films and deceits—I bound him by an oath to secrecy—and I told him my tale. He was a bold man and a learned, and promised me relief and release.

"Where is the figure now?" said he, smiling; "I see it not."

And I answered, "It is six feet from us!"

"I see it not," said he again; "and if it were real, my senses would not receive the image less palpably than yours." And he spoke to me as schoolmen speak. I did not argue nor reply, but I ordered the servants to prepare a room, and to cover the floor with a thick layer of

sand. When it was done, I bade the Leech follow me into the room, and I barred the door. "Where is the figure now?" repeated he; and I said, "Six feet from us as before!" And the Leech smiled. "Look on the floor!" said I, and I pointed to the spot; "what see you?" And the Leech shuddered, and clung to me that he might not fall. "The sand there," said he, "was smooth when we entered, and now I see on that spot the print of human feet!"

And I laughed, and dragged my *living* companion on; "See," said I, "where we move what follows us!"

The Leech gasped for breath; "The print," said he, "of those human feet!"

"Can you not minister to me then?" cried I, in a sudden and fierce agony, "and must I *never* be alone again?"

And I saw the feet of the dead thing trace these words upon the sand:—

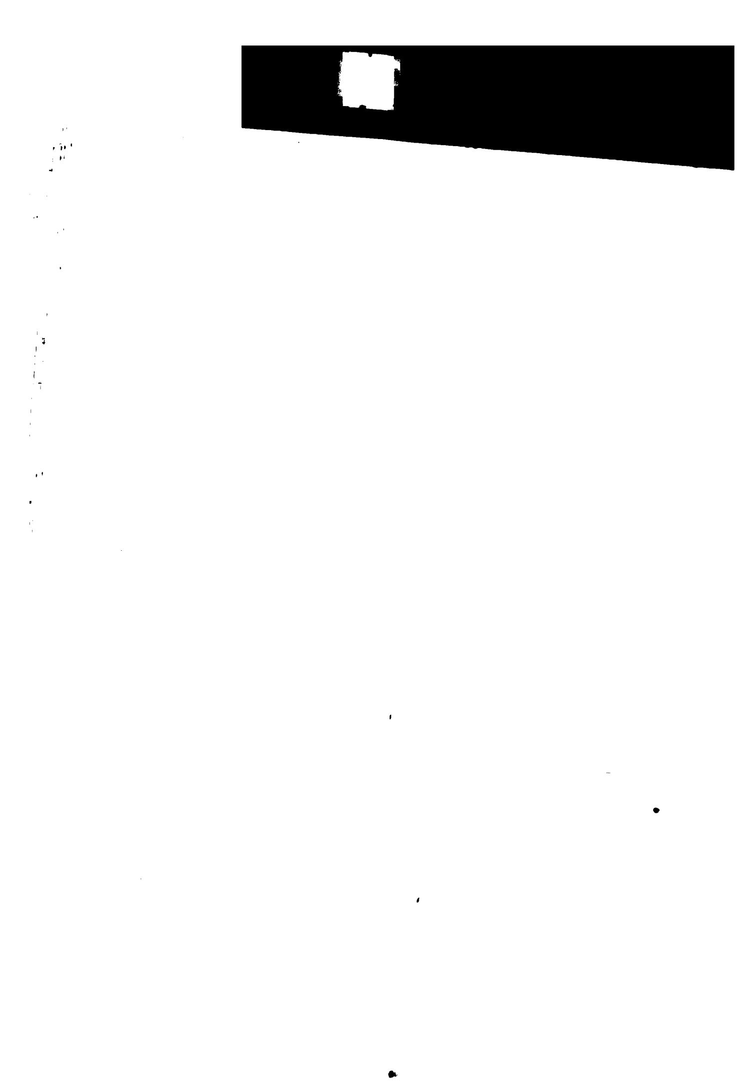
"SOLITUDE IS ONLY FOR THE GUILTLESS—EVIL THOUGHTS ARE COMPANIONS FOR A TIME—

EVIL DEEDS ARE COMPANIONS THROUGH ETERNITY—THY HATRED MADE ME BREAK UPON THY LONELINESS—THY CRIME DESTROYS LONELINESS FOR EVER."



ON THE

DEPARTURE OF YOUTH.



ON THE

DEPARTURE OF YOUTH.

In the seven stages of man's life, there are three epochs more distinctly marked than the rest, viz. —the departure of Boyhood—the departure of Youth — the commencement of Old Age. I consider the several dates of these epochs, in ordinary constitutions, commence at fifteen, thirty, and fifty years of age. It is of the second that I am about to treat. When I call it the epoch for the departure of youth, I do not of course intend to signify, that this, the prime and zenith of our years, is as yet susceptible of decay. Our frames are as young as they were five years before, it is the mind that has become ma-

tured. By youth I mean the growing and progressive season—its departure is only visible inasmuch as we have become, as it were, fixed and stationary. The qualities that peculiarly belong to youth—its "quick-thronging fancies"—its exuberance of energy and feeling, cease to be our distinctions at thirty. We are young but not youthful. It is not at thirty that we know the wild phantasies of Romeo—scarcely at thirty that we could halt irresolute in the visionary weaknesses of Hamlet. The *passions* of youth may be no less felt than heretofore; it is youth's *sentiment* we have lost. The muscles of the mind are firmer, but it is the nerve that is less susceptible, and vibrates no more to the lightest touch of pleasure or of pain.—Yes, it is the prime of our manhood which is the departure of our youth!

It seems to me, that to reflective and lofty minds accustomed to survey, and fitted to comprehend, the great aims of life,—this is a period peculiarly solemn and important. It is a spot on which we ought to rest for a while from our journey. It is the summit of the hill from

which we look down on two even divisions of our journey. We have left behind us a profusion of bright things—never again shall we traverse such fairy fields—with such eager hopes;—never again shall we find the same

> "Glory in the grass or splendour in the flower."

The dews upon the herbage are dried up. The morning is no more.

> "We made a posy while the time ran by,
>
> . . . . .
>
> But Time did beckon to the flowers, and they
> By noon most cunningly did steal away
> And wither in the hand.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Farewell, dear flowers, sweetly your time ye spent!' *

We ought then to pause for awhile—to review the past—to gather around us the memories and the warnings of experience—to feel that the lighter part of our destinies is completed—that the graver has begun—that our follies and our errors have become to us the monitors of wisdom: for since these are the tributes which Fate exacts from Mortality, they are not to be idly re-

* George Herbert.

gretted, but to be solemnly redeemed. And if we are penetrated with this thought, our Past becomes the mightiest preacher to our Future. Looking back over the tombs of departed errors, we behold, by the side of each, the face of a warning Angel! It is the prayer of a foolish heart, "Oh that my time could return—Oh that this had been done, or that could be undone;" rather should we rejoice that so long a season of reparation yet remains to us, and that Experience has taught us the lessons of suffering which make men wise. Wisdom is an acquisition purchased in proportion to the disappointments which our own frailties have entailed upon us. For no one is taught by the sufferings of another. We ourselves must have felt the burning in order to shun the fire. To refer again to the beautiful poem I have already quoted, the flowers that were

> "Fit, while they lived, for smell and ornament,
> *Serve*, after death, for *cures*.'

At the age of thirty most men's characters experience a revulsion. The common pleasures of

the world have been tasted to the full and begin to pall. We have reduced to the sobering test of reality, the visions of youth—we no longer expect that perfection in our species which our inexperience at first foretold — we no longer chase frivolities, or hope chimæras. Perhaps one of the most useful lessons that Disappointment has taught us, is a true estimate of Love. For at first we are too apt to imagine that woman (poor partner with ourselves in the frailties of humanity) must be perfect—that the dreams of the poets have a corporeal being, and that God has ordained to us that unclouded nature—that unchanging devotion—that seraph heart, which it has been the great vice of Fiction to attribute to the daughters of clay. And, in hoping perfection, with how much excellence have we been discontented—to how many idols have we changed our worship! Thirsting for the Golden Fountain of the Fable, from how many streams have we turned away, weary and in disgust! The experience which teaches us at last the due estimate of woman, has gone far

to instruct us in the claims of men. Love, once the monopolizer of our desires, gives way to more manly and less selfish passions—and we wake from a false paradise to the real earth.

Not less important is the lesson which teaches us not to measure mankind by ideal standards of morality; for to imagine too fondly that men are gods, is to end by believing that they are demons: the young pass usually through a period of misanthropy, and the misanthropy is acute in proportion to their own generous confidence in human excellence. We the least forgive faults in those from whom we the most expected excellence. But out of the ashes of misanthropy Benevolence rises again; we find many virtues where we had imagined all was vice—many acts of disinterested friendship where we had fancied all was calculation and fraud—and so gradually from the two extremes we pass to the proper medium; and feeling that no human being is wholly good, or wholly base, we learn that true knowledge of mankind which induces us to expect little and forgive much. The world cures

alike the optimist and the misanthrope. Without this proper and sober estimate of men, we have neither prudence in the affairs of life, nor toleration for contrary opinions—we *tempt* the cheater, and then *condemn* him—we believe so strongly in one faith, that we would sentence dissentients as heretics. It is experience alone that teaches us that he *who is discreet is seldom betrayed*, and that out of the opinions we condemn, spring often the actions we admire.

At the departure of youth then, in collecting and investigating our minds, we should feel ourselves embued with these results for our future guidance, viz. a knowledge of the true proportion of the passions, so as not to give to one the impetus which should be shared by all; a conviction of the idleness of petty objects which demand large cares, and that true gauge and measurement of men which shall neither magnify nor dwarf the attributes and materials of human nature. From these results we draw conclusions to make us not only wiser but better men. The years through which we have

passed have probably developed in us whatever capacities we possess—they have taught us in what we are most likely to excel, and for what we are most fitted. We may come now with better success than Rasselas to the Choice of Life. And in this I incline to believe, that we ought to prefer that career from which we are convinced our minds and tempers will derive the greatest share of happiness—not disdaining the pursuit of honours, or of wealth, or the allurements of a social career—but calmly balancing the advantages and the evils of each course, whether of private life or of public—of retirement or of crowds,—and deciding on each according, not to abstract rules, not to vague maxims on the nothingness of fame, or the joys of solitude, but according to the peculiar bias and temper of our own minds. For toil to some is happiness and rest to others. This man can only breathe in crowds, and that man only in solitude. Fame is necessary to the quiet of one nature, and is void of all attraction to another. Let each choose his career according to the dictates of his

own breast– and this, not from the vulgar doctrine that our own happiness, as happiness only, is to be our being's end, and aim, (for in minds rightly and nobly constituted, there are aims *out* of ourselves, stronger than aught of self,) but because a mind not at ease is rarely virtuous. Happiness and Virtue react upon each other—the best are not only the happiest, but the happiest are usually the best. Drawn into pursuits, however estimable in themselves, from which our tastes and dispositions recoil, we are too 'apt to grow irritable, morose, and discontented with our kind; our talents do not spring forth naturally; forced by the heat of circumstance, they produce unseasonable and unwholesome fruit. The genius that is roused by things at war with it, too often becomes malignant, and retaliates upon men the wounds it receives from circumstance; but when we are engaged in that course of life which most flatters our individual bias, whether it be action or seclusion, literature or business, we enjoy within us that calm which is the best atmosphere of the mind, and in which all the

mind's produce is robust and mellow. Our sense of contentment makes us kindly and benevolent to others; we are not chafed and galled by cares which are tyrannical, because ungenial. We are fulfilling our proper destiny, and those around us feel the sunshine of our own hearts. It is for this reason that happiness should be our main object in the choice of life, *because* out of happiness springs that state of mind which becomes virtue: —and this should be remembered by those of generous and ardent dispositions who would immolate themselves for the supposed utility of others, plunging into a war of things for which their natures are unsuited. Among the few truths which Rousseau has left us, none is more true than this—" It is not permitted to a man to corrupt himself for the sake of mankind." We must be useful according, not to general theories, but to our individual capacities and habits. To be practical we must call forth the qualities we are *able* to practise. Each star, shining in its appointed sphere, each—no matter its magnitude or its gyration,—contributes to the general light.

To different ages there are different virtues—the reckless generosity of the boy is a wanton folly in the man. At thirty there is no apology for the spendthrift. From that period to the verge of age, is the fitting season for a considerate foresight and prudence in affairs. Approaching age itself we have less need of economy. And Nature recoils from the miser, caressing Mammon with one hand, while Death plucks him by the other. We should provide for our age, in order that our age may have no urgent wants of this world, to absorb it from the meditations of the next. It is awful to see the lean hands of Dotage making a coffer of the grave! But while, with the departure of youth, we enter stedfastly into the great business of life, while our reason constructs its palaces from the ruins of our passions—while we settle into thoughtful, and resolute, and aspiring men—we should beware how thus occupied by the world, the world grow "too much with us." It is a perilous age that of ambition and discretion—a perilous age that when youth recedes from us—

if we forget that the soul should cherish its own youth through eternity! It is precisely as we feel how little laws can make us good while they forbid us to be evil—it is precisely as our experience puts a check upon our impulses—it is precisely as we sigh to own how contaminating is example, that we should be on our guard over our own hearts—not, now, lest they err—but rather lest they harden. Now is the period, when the affections can be easiest scared—when we can dispense the most with Love—when in the lustiness and hardihood of our golden prime we can best stand alone—remote alike from the ideal yearnings of youth, and the clinging helplessness of age. Now is the time, when neither the voice of woman, nor the smiles of children, touch us as they did once, and may again. We are occupied, absorbed, wrapt in our schemes and our stern designs. The world is our mistress, our projects are our children. A man is startled when he is told this truth; let him consider, let him pause—if he be actively engaged, (as few at that age are

not,) and ask himself if I wrong him?—if, insensibly and unconsciously, he has not retreated into the citadel of self?— Snail-like, he walks the world, bearing about him his armour and retreat. Is not this to be guarded against? Does it not require our caution, lest caution itself block up the beautiful avenues of the heart? What can life give us if we sacrifice what is fairest in ourselves? What does experience profit, if it forbid us to be generous, to be noble —if it counterwork and blight the graces and the charities, and all that belong to the Tender and the Exalted—without which wisdom is harsh, and virtue has no music in her name. As Paley says, that we ought not to refuse alms too sternly for fear we encourage the idle, lest, on the other hand, we blunt the heart into a habit of deafness to the distressed—so with the less vulgar sympathies, shall we check the impulse and the frankness, and the kindly interpretation, and the human sensibility, (which are the alms of the soul,) because they may expose us to occasional deceit? Shall the error of softness justify the

habits of obduracy?—and lest we should suffer by the faults of others, shall we vitiate ourselves?

This, then, is the age in which, while experience becomes our guide, we should follow its dictates with a certain measured, and jealous caution. We must remember how apt man is to extremes—rushing from credulity and weakness to suspicion and distrust. And still if we are *truly* prudent, we shall cherish, despite occasional delusions—those noblest and happiest of our tendencies—*to love and to confide.*

I know not indeed a more beautiful spectacle in the world than an old man, who has gone with honour through all its storms and contests, and who retains to the last the freshness of feeling that adorned his youth. This is the true green old age—this makes a southern winter of declining years, in which the sunlight warms, though the heats are gone,—such are ever welcome to the young—and sympathy unites, while wisdom guides. There is this distinction between respect and veneration—the latter has *always* in it something of love.

This, too, is the age in which we ought calmly to take the fitting estimate of the opinions of the world. In youth we are too apt to despise, in maturity too inclined to over-rate, the sentiments of others, and the silent influences of the public. It is right to fix the medium. Among the happiest and proudest possessions of a man is his character—it is a wealth—it is a rank of itself. It usually procures him the honours and rarely the jealousies of Fame. Like most treasures that are attained less by circumstances than ourselves, character is a more felicitous reputation than glory. The wise man therefore despises not the opinion of the world—he estimates it at its full value—he does not wantonly jeopardize his treasure of a good name—he does not rush from vanity alone, against the received sentiments of others—he does not hazard his costly jewel with unworthy combatants and for a petty stake. He respects the legislation of decorum. If he be benevolent, as well as wise, he will remember that character affords him a thousand utilities—that it enables him the better to for-

give the erring, and to shelter the assailed. But that character is built on a false and hollow basis, which is formed not from the dictates of our own breast, but solely from the fear of censure. What is the essence and the life of character? Principle, integrity, independence!—or, as one of our great old writers hath it, "that inbred loyalty unto Virtue which can serve her without a livery." These are qualities that hang not upon any man's breath. They must be formed within ourselves; they must *make ourselves*—indissoluble and indestructible as the soul! If, conscious of these possessions, we trust tranquilly to time and occasion to render them known; we may rest assured that our character, sooner or later, will establish itself. We cannot more defeat our own object than by a restless and fevered anxiety as to what the world will say of us. Except, indeed, if we are tempted to unworthy compliances with what our conscience disapproves, in order to please the fleeting and capricious countenance of the time. There is a moral honesty in a due regard for character

which will not shape itself to the humours of the crowd. And this if honest is no less wise. For the crowd never long esteems those who flatter it at their own expense. He who has the suppleness of the demagogue will live to complain of the fickleness of the mob.

If in early youth it is natural sometimes to brave and causelessly to affront opinion, so also it is natural, on the other hand, and not perhaps unamiable, for the milder order of spirits to incur the contrary extreme and stand in too great an awe of the voices of the world. They feel as if they had no right to be confident of their own judgment—they have not tested themselves by temptation and experience. They are willing to give way on points on which they are not assured. And it is a pleasant thing to prop their doubts on the stubborn asseverations of others. But in vigorous and tried manhood, we should be all in all to ourselves. Our own past and our own future should be our main guides. "He who is not a physician at thirty is a fool"—a physician to his mind, as to his body, acquainted

with his own moral constitution—its diseases, its remedies, its diet, its conduct. We should learn so to regulate our own thoughts and actions, that while comprising the world, the world should not bias them. Take away the world—and we should think and act the same—a world to ourselves. Thus trained and thus accustomed —we can bear occasional reproach and momentary slander with little pain. The rough contact of the herd presses upon no sore—the wrongs of the hour do not incense or sadden us. We rely upon ourselves and upon time. If I have rightly said that principle is a main essence of character, principle is a thing we cannot change or shift. As it has been finely expressed, "Principle is a passion for truth," *—and as an earlier and homelier writer hath it, "The truths of God are the pillars of the world."† The truths we believe in are the pillars of *our* world. The man who at thirty can be easily persuaded out of his own sense of right, is never respected after

* Hazlitt.

† From a scarce and curious little tract called "The Simple Cobbler of Aggavvam." 1647.

he has served a purpose. I do not know even if we do not think more highly of the intellectual uses of one who sells himself well, than those of one who lends himself for nothing.

Lastly, this seems to me, above all, an age which calls upon us to ponder well and thoughtfully upon the articles of our moral and our religious creed. Entering more than ever into the mighty warfare of the world, we should summon to our side whatever auxiliaries can aid us in the contest—to cheer, to comfort, to counsel, to direct. It is a time seriously to analyse the confused elements of belief—to apply ourselves to such solution of our doubts as reason may afford us. Happy he who can shelter himself with confidence under the assurance of immortality, and feel "that the world is not an Inn but a Hospital—a place not to live but to die in," acknowledging "that piece of divinity that is in us—that something that was before the elements, and owes no homage to the sun."* For him there is indeed the mastery and the con-

* Religio Medici, Part II. Sect. ii.

quest, not only over death, but over life; and "he forgets that he can die if he complain of misery!"*

I reject all sectarian intolerance — I affect no uncharitable jargon—frankly I confess that I have known many before whose virtues I bow down ashamed of my own errors, though they were not guided and supported by Belief. But I never met with one such, who did not own that while he would not have been worse, he would have been happier, *could* he have believed. I, indeed, least of all men ought harshly to search into that Realm of Opinion which no law can reach; for I, too, have had my interval of doubt, of despondency, of the Philosophy of the Garden. Perhaps there are many with whom Faith—the Saviour,—must lie awhile in darkness and the Grave of Unbelief, ere, immortal and immortalizing, it ascend from its tomb—a God!

But humbly and reverently comparing each state with each, I exclaim again, 'Happy, thrice happy, he who relies on the eternity of the soul

* Religio Medici, Part I. Sect. xliv.

—who believes—as the loved fall one after one from his side—that they have returned "to their native country" *—that they await the divine re-union; who feels that each treasure of knowledge he attains he carries with him through illimitable being—who sees in Virtue, the essence and the element of the world he is to inherit, and to which he but accustoms himself betimes; who comforts his weariness amidst the storms of time, by seeing, far across the melancholy seas, the haven he will reach at last—who deems that every struggle has its assured reward, and every sorrow has its balm—who knows, however forsaken or bereaved below, that he never can be alone, and never be deserted—that above him is the protection of Eternal Power, and the mercy of Eternal Love! Ah, well said the dreamer of philosophy, "How much *He* knew of the human heart who first called God our Father!"

As, were our lives limited to a single year, and we had never beheld the flower that perishes

* Form of Chinese Epitaphs.

from the earth restored by the dawning spring, we might doubt the philosophy that told us it was not dead, but dormant only for a time; yet, to continue existence to another season, would be to know that the seeming miracle was but the course of nature;—even so, this life is to eternity but as a single revolution of the sun, in which we close our views with the winter of the soul, when its leaves fade and vanish, and it seems outwardly to rot away; but the seasons roll on unceasingly over the blank and barrenness of the grave—and those who, above, have continued the lease of life, behold the imperishable flower burst forth into the second spring!

This hope makes the dignity of man, nor can I conceive how he who feels it breathing its exalted eloquence through his heart, can be guilty of one sordid action, or brood over one low desire. To be immortal is to be the companion of God!

THE WORLD AS IT IS.

A TALE.

THE WORLD AS IT IS.

"WHAT a delightful thing the world is! Lady Lennox's ball, last night—how charming it was! —every one so kind, and Charlotte looking so pretty—the nicest girl I ever saw! But I must dress now. Balfour is to be here at twelve with the horse he wants to sell me. How lucky I am to have such a friend as Balfour!—so entertaining—so good-natured—so devilish clever too—and such an excellent heart! Ah! how unlucky! it rains a little; but never mind, it will clear up; and if it don't—why one can play at billiards. What a delightful thing the world is!"

So soliloquized Charles Nugent, a man of twenty-one—a philanthropist—an optimist. Our young gentleman was an orphan, of good family and large fortune; brave, generous, confiding, and open-hearted. His ability was above the ordinary standard, and he had a warm love, and a pure taste, for letters. He had even bent a knee to Philosophy, but the calm and cold graces with which the goddess receives her servants had soon discontented the young votary with the worship. "Away!" cried he, one morning, flinging aside the volume of La Rochefoucault, which he had fancied he understood; "Away with this selfish and debasing code!—men are not the mean things they are here described—be it mine to think exultingly of my species!" My dear Experience, with how many fine sentiments do you intend to play the devil? It is not without reason that Goëthe tells us, that though Fate is an excellent, she is also a very expensive, schoolmistress.

"Ha! my dear Nugent, how are you?" and Captain Balfour enters the room; a fine dark,

handsome fellow, with something of pretension in his air and a great deal of frankness. "And here is the horse. Come to the window. Does not he step finely? What action! Do you remark his forehand? How he carries his tail! Gad, I don't think you shall have him, after all!"

"Nay, my dear fellow, you may well be sorry to part with him. He is superb! Quite sound —eh?"

"Have him examined."

"Do you think I would not take your word for it? The price?"

"Fix it yourself. Prince Paul once offered me a hundred and eighty; but to you ——"

"You shall have it."

"No, Nugent—say a hundred and fifty."

"I won't be outdone—there 's a draft for the one hundred and eighty guineas."

"Upon my soul, I'm ashamed; but you are such a rich fellow. John, take the horse to Mr. Nugent's stables. Where will you dine to-day?—at the Cocoa-tree?"

"With all my heart."

The young men rode together. Nugent was delighted with his new purchase. They dined at the Cocoa-tree. Balfour ordered some early peaches. Nugent paid the bill. They went to the Opera.

"Do you see that *figurante*, Florine?" asked Balfour, "Pretty ancle—eh?"

"Yes, *comme ça*—but dances awkwardly—not handsome."

"What! not handsome? Come and talk to her. She's more admired than any girl on the stage."

They went behind the scenes, and Balfour convinced his friend that he ought to be enchanted with Florine. Before the week was out the *figurante* kept her carriage, and in return, Nugent supped with her twice a-week.

Nugent had written a tale for "The Keepsake;" it was his first literary effort; it was tolerably good, and exceedingly popular. One day he was lounging over his breakfast, and a tall, thin gentleman, in black, was announced, by the name of Mr. Gilpin.

Mr. Gilpin made a most respectful bow, and heaved a peculiarly profound sigh. Nugent was instantly seized with a lively interest in the stranger. " Sir, it is with great regret," faltered forth Mr. Gilpin, " that I seek you. I—I—I—" A low, consumptive cough checked his speech. Nugent offered him a cup of tea. The civility was refused, and the story continued.

Mr. Gilpin's narration is soon told, when he himself is not the narrator. An unfortunate literary man—once in affluent circumstances—security for a treacherous friend—friend absconded—pressure of unforeseen circumstances—angel wife and four cherub children—a book coming out next season—deep distress at present—horror at being forced to beg—forcibly struck by generous sentiments expressed in the tale written by Mr. Nugent—a ray of hope broke on his mind—and *voilà* the causes of Mr. Gilpin's distress and Mr. Gilpin's visit. Never was there a more interesting personification of the afflicted man of letters than Gregory

Gilpin. He looked pale, patient, and respectable; he coughed frequently, and he was dressed in deep mourning. Nugent's heart swelled—he placed a bank-note in Mr. Gilpin's hands—he promised more effectual relief, and Mr. Gilpin retired, overpowered with his own gratitude and Mr. Nugent's respectful compassion.

"How happy I am to be rich!" said the generous young philanthropist, throwing open his chest.

Nugent went to a *converzazione* at Lady Lennox's. Her Ladyship was a widow, and a charming woman. She was a little of the blue, and a little of the fine lady, and a little of the beauty, and a little of the coquette, and a great deal of the sentimentalist. She had one daughter, without a shilling; she had taken a warm interest in a young man of the remarkable talents and singular amiability of Charles Nugent. He sate next her—they talked of the heartlessness of the world—it is a subject on which men of twenty-one and ladies of forty-five are especially eloquent. Lady

Lennox complained, Mr. Nugent defended. "One does not talk much of innocence," it is said, or something like it is said, somewhere in Madame d'Epinay's Memoirs, "without being sadly corrupted;" and nothing brings out the goodness of our own hearts more than a charge against the heartlessness of others.

"An excellent woman!" thought Nugent; "what warm feelings!—how pretty her daughter is! Oh! a charming family!"

Charlotte Lennox played an affecting air; Nugent leaned over the piano; they talked about music, poetry, going on the water, sentiment, and Richmond Hill. They made up a party of pleasure. Nugent did not sleep well that night—he was certainly in love.

When he rose the next morning, the day was bright and fine; Balfour, the best of friends, was to be with him in an hour; Balfour's horse, the best of horses, was to convey him to Richmond; and at Richmond he was to meet Lady Lennox, the most agreeable of mothers—and Charlotte, the most enchanting of daughters.

The *figurante* had always been a bore—she was now forgotten. "It certainly is a delightful world!" repeated Nugent, as he tied his neckcloth.

It was some time—I will not say how long—after the date of this happy day; Nugent was alone in his apartment, and walking to and fro—his arms folded, and a frown upon his brow. "What a rascal! what a mean wretch!—and the horse was lame when he sold it—not worth ten pounds!—and I so confiding—damn my folly! *That*, however, I should not mind; but to have saddled me with his cast-off mistress!—to make me the laughing-stock of the world! By heavens, he shall repent it! Borrowed money of me, then made a jest of my good-nature!—introduced me to his club, in order to pillage me!—but, thank God, I can shoot him yet! Ha! Colonel; this is kind!"

Colonel Nelmore, an elderly gentleman, well known in society, with a fine forehead, a shrewd, contemplative eye, and an agreeable address,

entered the room. To him Nugent poured forth the long list of his grievances, and concluded by begging him to convey a challenge to the best of friends—Captain Balfour. The Colonel raised his eyebrows.

"But,—my dear sir,—this gentleman has certainly behaved ill to you, I allow it—but for what specific offence do you mean to challenge him?"

"For his conduct in general."

The Colonel laughed.

"For saying yesterday, then, that I was grown a d—d bore, and he should cut me in future. He told Selwyn so in the bow-window at White's."

The Colonel took snuff.

"My good young friend," said he, "I see you don't know the world. Come and dine with me to-day—a punctual seven. We'll talk over these matters. Meanwhile, you can't challenge a man for calling you a bore."

"Not challenge him!—what should I do then?"

"Laugh—shake your head at him, and say—'Ah! Balfour, you're a sad fellow!'"

The Colonel succeeded in preventing the challenge, but Nugent's indignation at the best of friends remained as warm as ever. He declined the Colonel's invitation—he was to dine with the Lennoxes. Meanwhile, he went to the shady part of Kensington Gardens to indulge his reflections.

He sat himself down in an arbour, and looked moralizingly over the initials, the dates, and the witticisms, that hands, long since mouldering, have consigned to the admiration of posterity.

A gay party were strolling by this retreat—their laughter and their voices preceded them. "Yes," said a sharp, dry voice, which Nugent recognised as belonging to one of the wits of the day—"Yes, I saw you, Lady Lennox, talking sentiment to Nugent—fie! how could you waste your time so unprofitably!"

"Ah! poor young man! he is certainly *bien bête*, with his fine phrases and so forth: but 'tis a good creature on the whole, and exceedingly useful!"

"Useful!"

"Yes; fills up a vacant place at one's table, at a day's warning; lends me his carriage-horses when mine have caught cold; subscribes to my charities for me: and supplies the drawing-room with flowers. In a word, if he were more sensible, he would be less agreeable: his sole charm is his foibles."

What a description by the most sentimental of mothers, of the most talented, the most interesting of young men. Nugent was thunder-struck; the party swept by; he was undiscovered.

He raved, he swore, he was furious. He go to the dinner to-day! No, he would write such a letter to the lady—it should speak daggers! But the daughter: Charlotte was not of the party. Charlotte—oh! Charlotte was quite a different creature from her mother—the most natural, the most simple of human beings, and evidently loved him. He could not be mistaken there. Yes, for her sake he would go to the dinner: he would smother his just resentment.

He went to Lady Lennox's. It was a large party. The young Marquis of Austerly had just returned from his travels. He was sitting next to the most lovely of daughters. Nugent was forgotten.

After dinner, however, he found an opportunity to say a few words in a whisper to Charlotte. He hinted a tender reproach, and he begged her to sing "*We met; 'twas in a crowd.*" Charlotte was hoarse—had caught cold. Charlotte could not sing. Nugent left the room, and the house. When he got to the end of the street, he discovered that he had left his cane behind. He went back for it, glad (for he was really in love) of an excuse for darting an angry glance at the most simple, the most natural of human beings, that should prevent her sleeping the whole night. He ascended the drawing-room; and Charlotte was delighting the Marquis of Austerly, who leaned over her chair, with "*We met; 'twas in a crowd.*"

Charlotte Lennox was young, lovely, and artful. Lord Austerly was young, inexperienced,

and vain. In less than a month, he proposed, and was accepted.

"Well, well!" said poor Nugent one morning, breaking from a reverie; "betrayed in my friendship, deceived in my love, the pleasure of doing good is still left to me. Friendship quits us at the first stage of life, Love at the second, Benevolence lasts till death! Poor Gilpin! how grateful he is: I must see if I can get him that place abroad." To amuse his thoughts, he took up a new magazine. He opened the page at a violent attack on himself—on his beautiful tale in the "Keepsake." The satire was not confined to the work; it extended to the author. He was a fop, a coxcomb, a ninny, an intellectual dwarf, a miserable creature, and an abortion! These are pleasant studies for a man out of spirits, especially before he is used to them. Nugent had just flung the magazine to the other end of the room, when his lawyer came to arrange matters about a mortgage, which the generous Nugent had already been forced to raise on his estates. The lawyer was

a pleasant, entertaining man of the world, accustomed to the society, for he was accustomed to the wants, of young men. He perceived that Nugent was a little out of humour. He attributed the cause, naturally enough, to the mortgage; and to divert his thoughts, he entered first on a general conversation.

"What rogues there are in the world!" said he. Nugent groaned. "This morning, for instance, before I came to you, I was engaged in a curious piece of business enough. A gentleman gave his son-in-law a qualification to stand for a borough: the son-in-law kept the deed, and so cheated the good gentleman out of more than three hundred pounds a-year. Yesterday I was employed against a fraudulent bankrupt—such an instance of long, premeditated, cold-hearted, deliberate rascality! And when I leave you, I must see what is to be done with a literary swindler, who, on the strength of a consumptive cough, and a suit of black, has been respectably living on compassion for the last two years."

" Ha !"

" He has just committed the most nefarious fraud—a forgery, in short, on his own uncle, who has twice seriously distressed himself to save the rogue of a nephew, and who must now submit to this loss, or proclaim, by a criminal prosecution, the disgrace of his own family. The nephew proceeded, of course, on his knowledge of my client's goodness of heart; and thus a man suffers in proportion to his amiability."

" Is his name Gil—Gil—Gilpin !" stammered Nugent.

" The same ! O-ho ! have you been bit, too, Mr. Nugent ?"

Before our hero could answer, a letter was brought to him. Nugent tore the seal; it was from the editor of the magazine in which he had just read his own condemnation. It ran thus:

" Sir,—Having been absent from London on unavoidable business for the last month, and the care of the —— Magazine having thereby de-

volved on another, who has very ill discharged its duties, I had the surprise and mortification of perceiving, on my return this day, that a most unwarrantable and personal attack upon you has been admitted in the number for this month. I cannot sufficiently express my regret, the more especially on finding that the article in question was written by a mere mercenary in letters. To convince you of my concern, and my resolution to guard against such unworthy proceedings in future, I enclose you another and yet severer attack, which was sent to us for our next number, and for which, I grieve to say, the unprincipled author has already succeeded in obtaining from the proprietors—a remuneration. I have the honour to be, Sir," &c. &c. &c.

Nugent's eyes fell on the enclosed paper: it was in the hand-writing of Mr. Gregory Gilpin, the most grateful of distressed literary men.

"You seem melancholy to-day, my dear Nu-

gent," said Colonel Nelmore, as he met his young friend walking with downcast eyes in the old mall of St. James's Park.

"I am unhappy, I am discontented; the gloss is faded from life," answered Nugent, sighing.

"I love meeting with a pensive man," said the Colonel: "let me join you, and let us dine together, *tête-à-tête*, at my bachelor's table. You refused me some time ago; may I be more fortunate now?"

"I shall be but poor company," rejoined Nugent; "but I am very much obliged to you, and I accept your invitation with pleasure."

Colonel Nelmore was a man who had told some fifty years. He had known misfortune in his day, and he had seen a great deal of the harsh realities of life. But he had not suffered nor lived in vain. He was no theorist, and did not affect the philosopher; but he was contented with a small fortune, popular with retired habits, observant with a love for study, and, above all,

he did a great deal of general good, exactly because he embraced no particular system.

"Yes," said Nugent, as they sat together after dinner, and the younger man had unbosomed to the elder, who had been his father's most intimate friend, all that had seemed to him the most unexampled of misfortunes—after he had repeated the perfidies of Balfour, the faithlessness of Charlotte, and the rascalities of Gilpin—"Yes," said he, "I now see my error; I no longer love my species; I no longer place reliance in the love, friendship, sincerity, or virtue of the world; I will no longer trust myself openhearted in this vast community of knaves; I will not fly mankind, but I will despise them."

The Colonel smiled. "You shall put on your hat, my young friend, and pay a little visit with me:—nay, no excuse: it is only an old lady, who has given me permission to drink tea with her." Nugent demurred, but consented. The two gentlemen walked to a small house in the Regent's Park. They were admitted to a drawing-room,

where they found a blind old lady, of a cheerful countenance, and prepossessing manners.

"And how does your son do?" asked the Colonel, after the first salutations were over, "have you seen him lately?"

"Seen him lately! why you know he rarely lets a day pass without calling on, or writing to, me. Since the affliction which visited me with blindness, though he has nothing to hope from me, though from my jointure I must necessarily be a burthen to one of his limited income and mixing so much with the world as he does; yet had I been the richest mother in England, and every thing at my own disposal, he could not have been more attentive, more kind to me. He will cheerfully give up the gayest party to come and read to me, if I am the least unwell, or the least out of spirits; and he sold his horses to pay Miss Blandly, since I could not afford from my own income to pay the salary, so accomplished a musician asked to become my companion. Music, you know, is now my chief luxury. Oh, he is a paragon of sons—the world think him

dissipated and heartless; but if they could see how tender he is to me!" exclaimed the mother, clasping her hands, as the tears gushed from her eyes. Nugent was charmed: the Colonel encouraged the lady to proceed; and Nugent thought he had never passed a more agreeable hour than in listening to her maternal praises of her affectionate son.

"Ah, Colonel!" said he, as they left the house, "how much wiser have you been than myself; you have selected your friends with discretion. What would I give to possess such a friend as that good son must be! But you never told me the lady's name."

"Patience," said the Colonel, taking snuff, "I have another visit to pay."

Nelmore turned down a little alley, and knocked at a small cottage. A woman with a child at her breast opened the door; and Nugent stood in one of those scenes of cheerful poverty which it so satisfies the complacency of the rich to behold.

"Aha!" said Nelmore, looking round, "you

seem comfortable enough now; your benefactor has not done his work by halves."

"Blessings on his heart, no! Oh, Sir, when I think how distressed he is himself, how often he has been put to it for money, how calumniated he is by the world, I cannot express how grateful I am, how grateful I ought to be. He has robbed himself to feed us, and merely because he knew my husband in youth."

The Colonel permitted the woman to run on. Nugent wiped his eyes, and left his purse behind him. "Who is this admirable, this self-denying man?" cried he, when they were once more in the street. "He is in distress himself—would I could relieve him! Ah, you already reconcile me to the world. I acknowledge your motive, in leading me hither; there are good men as well as bad. All are not Balfours and Gilpins! But the name—the name of these poor people's benefactor!"

"Stay," said the Colonel, as they now entered Oxford-street; this is lucky indeed, I see a good lady whom I wish to accost." "Well, Mrs. John-

son," addressing a stout, comely, middle-aged woman of respectable appearance, who, with a basket on her arm, was coming out of an oil shop; "so you have been labouring in your vocation I see—making household purchases. And how is your young lady?"

"Very well, Sir, I am happy to say," replied the old woman, curtseying. "And you are well too, I hope, Sir?"

"Yes, considering the dissipation of the long season, pretty well, thank you. But I suppose your young mistress is as gay and heartless as ever—a mere fashionable wife, eh!"

"Sir!" said the woman, bridling up, "there is not a better lady in the world than my young lady; I have known her since she was that high!"

"What, she's good-tempered, I suppose?" said the Colonel sneering.

"Good-tempered—I believe it is impossible for her to say a harsh word to any one. There never was so mild, so even-like a temper."

"What, and not heartless, eh! this is too good!"

"Heartless! she nursed me herself when I broke my leg coming upstairs; and every night before she went out to any party, she would come into my room with her sweet smile, and see if I wanted anything."

"And you fancy, Mrs. Johnson, that she'll make a good wife: why she was not much in love when she married."

"I don't know as to that, Sir, whether she was or not; but I'm sure she is always studying my Lord's wishes, and I heard him myself say this very morning to his brother—'Arthur, if you knew what a treasure I possess!'"

"You are very right," said the Colonel, resuming his natural manner: "and I only spoke for the pleasure of seeing how well and how justly you could defend your mistress; she is, truly, an excellent lady—good evening to you."

"I have seen that woman before," said Nugent, "but I can't think where; she has the appearance of being a housekeeper in some family."

"She is so."

"How pleasant it is to hear of female excellence in the great world," continued Nugent, sighing; "it was evident to see the honest servant was sincere in her praise. Happy husband, whoever he may be!"

They were now at the Colonel's house. "Just let me read this passage," said Nelmore, opening the pages of a French Philosopher, and as I do not pronounce French like a native, I will translate as I proceed.

"In order to love mankind—expect but little from them; in order to view their faults, without bitterness, we must *accustom* ourselves to pardon them, and to perceive that indulgence is a justice which frail humanity has a right to demand from wisdom. Now, nothing tends more to dispose us to indulgence, to close our hearts against hatred, to open them to the principles of a humane and soft morality, than a profound knowledge of the human heart. Accordingly, the wisest men have always been the most indulgent," &c.

" And now prepare to be surprised. That good son whom you admired so much—whom you wished you could obtain as a friend, is Captain Balfour—that generous, self-denying man, whom you desired yourself so nobly to relieve, is Mr. Gilpin—that young lady who in the flush of health, beauty, dissipation, and conquest, could attend the sick chamber of her servant, and whom her husband discovers to be a treasure, is Charlotte Lennox !"

" Good Heavens !" cried Nugent, " what then am I to believe? has some juggling been practised on my understanding, and are Balfour, Gilpin, and Miss Lennox, after all, patterns of perfection?

" No, indeed, very far from it: Balfour is a dissipated, reckless man—of loose morality and a low standard of honour: he saw you were destined to purchase experience—he saw you were destined to be plundered by some one—he thought he might as well be a candidate for the profit. He laughed afterwards at your expense, not because he despised you; on the contrary,



I believe that he liked you very much in his way, but because in the world he lives in, every man enjoys a laugh at his acquaintance. Charlotte Lennox saw in you a desirable match; nay, I believe she had a positive regard for you; but she had been taught all her life to think equipage, wealth, and station better than love. She could not resist the temptation of being Marchioness of Austerly—not one girl in twenty could; yet she is not on that account the less good-tempered, good-natured, nor the less likely to be a good mistress and a tolerable wife. Gilpin is the worst instance of the three. Gilpin is an evident scoundrel; but Gilpin is in evident distress. He was, in all probability, very sorry to attack you who had benefited him so largely; but perhaps, as he is a dull dog, the only thing the Magazines would buy of him was abuse. You must not think he maligned you out of malice, out of ingratitude, out of wantonness; he maligned you for ten guineas. Yet Gilpin is a man, who, having swindled his father out of ten guineas, would in the joy of the moment give five to a

beggar. In the present case he was actuated by a bettter feeling: he was serving the friend of his childhood—few men forget those youthful ties, however they break through others. Your mistake was not the single mistake of supposing the worst people the best—it was the double mistake of supposing common-place people now the best — now the worst; — in making what might have been a pleasant acquaintance an intimate friend; in believing a man in distress must necessarily be a man of merit; in thinking a good-tempered, pretty girl, was an exalted specimen of Human Nature. You were then about to fall into the opposite extreme—and to be as indiscriminating in suspicion as you were in credulity. Would that I could flatter myself that I had saved you from that—the more dangerous—error of the two!"

"You have — my dear Nelmore; and now lend me your Philosopher!"

"With pleasure; but one short maxim is as good as all Philosophers can teach you, for Philosophers can only enlarge on it—it is simple—it is this—'TAKE THE WORLD AS IT IS!'"



KNEBWORTH.



KNEBWORTH.

The English arrogate to themselves the peculiar attachment to home—the national conviction of the sacredness of its serene asylum. But the Ancients seem equally to have regarded the "veneranda Domus" with love and worship. By them the hospitable hearth was equally deemed the centre of unspeakable enjoyments—their gayest poets linger on its attractions—the House as well as the Temple had its secret penetralia, which no uninitiated stranger might profane with unbidden presence; the Household Gods were their especial deities—the most fami-

hold Gods!—a beautiful notion th
tors, for us at least, were divine,
with unforgetful tenderness over the
living) of their happiest emotions
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Atrium is the heart. Our Househol
the memories of our childhood—the r
of the hearth round which

visiting an Irish Cabin, which, in the spirit of condescending kindness, the Lady Bountiful of the place had transformed into the graceful neatness of an English cottage, training roses up the wall, glazing the windows, and boarding the mud floor;—I was touched by the homely truth which the poor peasant uttered as he gazed, half gratefully, half indignantly, on the change. "It is all very kind," said he, in his dialect, which I am obliged to translate; "but the good lady does not know how dear to a poor man is every thing that reminds him of the time when he played instead of working—these great folks do not understand us." It was quite true; on that mud floor the child had played, round that hearth, with its eternal smoke, which now admitted, through strange portals, the uncomfortable daylight, he had sate jesting with the kind hearts that now beat no more. These new comforts saddened and perplexed him—not because they were *comforts*, but because they were *new*. They had not the associations of his childhood; the great folks did not understand him; they de-

spised his indifference to greater luxuries. Alas! they did not perceive that in that indifference there was all the poetry of sentiment. The good lady herself dwelt in an old-fashioned, inconvenient, mansion. Suppose some oppressive benefactor had converted its dingy rooms and dreary galleries into a modern, well-proportioned, and ungenially cheerful residence, would she have been pleased? Would she not have missed the nursery she had played in?—the little parlour by whose hearth she could yet recall to fancy the face of her mother long gone?—Would ottomans and mirrors supply the place of the old worm-eaten chair from which her father, on sabbath nights, had given forth the holy lecture?—or the little discoloured glass in which thirty years ago, she had marked her own maiden blushes, when some dear name was suddenly spoken? No, her old paternal house, rude though it be, is dearer to her than a new palace; can she not conceive that the same feelings may make "the hut to which his soul conforms," dearer to the peasant than the new

residence which is as a palace to him? Why should that be a noble and tender sentiment in the rich, which is scorned as a brutal apathy in the poor? The peasant was right—'Great folks understand him not!'

Amidst the active labours, in which, from my earliest youth, I have been plunged, one of the greatest luxuries I know is to return, for short intervals, to the place in which the happiest days of my childhood glided away. It is an old manorial seat that belongs to my mother, the heiress of its former lords. The house, formerly of vast extent, built round a quadrangle, at different periods, from the date of the second crusade to that of the reign of Elizabeth, was in so ruinous a condition when she came to its possession, that three sides of it were obliged to be pulled down: the fourth yet remaining, and much embellished in its architecture, is in itself one of the largest houses in the county, and still contains the old oak hall, with its lofty ceiling, and raised music gallery. The place has something of the character of Penshurst,—and its venerable avenues, which

slope from the house down the declivity of the park, giving wide views of the opposite hills crowded with cottages and spires, impart to the scene that peculiarly English, half stately, and wholly cultivated, character which the poets of Elizabeth's day so much loved to linger upon. As is often the case with similar residences, the church stands in the park, at a bow-shot from the house, and formerly the walls of the outer court nearly reached the green sanctuary that surrounds the sacred edifice. The church itself, dedicated anciently to St. Mary, is worn and grey, in the simplest architecture of the ecclesiastical Gothic, and, standing on the brow of the hill, its single tower at a distance blends with the turrets of the house,—so that the two seem one pile. Beyond, to the right, half-way down the hill, and neighboured by a dell, girded with trees, is an octagon building of the beautiful Grecian form, erected by the present owner—it is the mausoleum of the family. Fenced from the deer, is a small surrounding space sown with flowers—those fairest children of the earth, which

the custom of all ages has dedicated to the Dead. The modernness of this building, which contrasts those in its vicinity, seems to me, from that contrast, to make its object more impressive. It stands out alone, in the venerable landscape with its immemorial hills and trees,—the prototype of the Thought of Death—a thing that dating with the living generation, admonishes them of their recent lease and its hastening end. For with all our boasted antiquity of race, we ourselves are the ephemera of the soil, and bear the truest relation, so far as our mortality is concerned, with that which is least old.

The most regular and majestic of the avenues I have described conducts to a sheet of water, that lies towards the extremity of the park. It is but small in proportion to the domain, but is clear and deep, and, fed by some subterraneous stream, its tide is fresh and strong beyond its dimensions. On its opposite bank is a small fishing-cottage, whitely peeping from a thick and gloomy copse of firs, and larch, and oak, through which shine, here and there, the red berries of

the mountain ash; and behind this, on the other side of the brown, moss-grown deer paling, is a wood of considerable extent. This, the farther bank of the water, is my favourite spot. Here, when a boy, I used to while away whole holy days, basking indolently in the noon of summer, and building castles in that cloudless air, until the setting of the sun.

The reeds then grew up, long and darkly green, along the margin; and though they have since yielded to the innovating scythe, and I hear the wind no longer glide and sigh amidst those earliest tubes of music, yet the whole sod is still fragrant, from Spring to Autumn, with innumerable heaths and wild flowers, and the crushed odours of the sweet thyme. And never have I seen a spot which the butterfly more loves to haunt, particularly that small fairy, blue-winged species which is tamer than the rest, and seems almost to invite you to admire it—throwing itself on the child's mercy as the robin upon man's. The varieties of the dragon-fly, glittering in the sun, dart ever through the

boughs and along the water. It is a world which the fairest of the insect race seem to have made their own. There is something in the hum and stir of a summer noon, which is inexpressibly attractive to the dreams of the imagination. It fills us with a sense of life, but a life not our own—it is the exuberance of creation itself that overflows around us. Man is absent, but life is present. Who has not spent hours in some such spot, cherishing dreams that have no connexion with the earth, and courting with half shut eyes, the images of the Ideal?

Stretched on the odorous grass, I see on the opposite shore that quiet church, where the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep—that mausoleum where my own dust shall rest at last, and the turrets of my childhood's home. All so solitary and yet so eloquent! Now the fern waves on the slope, and the deer comes forth, marching with his stately step to the water-side to pause and drink. O Nymphs!—O Fairies!—O Poetry, I am yours again!

I do not know how it is, but every year that

I visit these scenes I have more need of their solace. My departed youth rises before me in more wan and melancholy hues, and the past saddens me more deeply with the present. Yet every year, perhaps, has been a stepping-stone in the ambition of my boyhood, and brought me nearer to the objects of my early dreams. It is not the mind that has been disappointed, it is the heart. What ties are broken—what affections marred! the Egeria of my hopes,—no cell conceals, no spell can invoke her now! Every pausing-place in the life of the ambitious is marked alike by the trophy and the tomb. But little men have the tomb without the trophy!

It is a small, and sequestered, and primitive village that of Knebworth, though but thirty miles from London; consisting of scattered cottages, with here and there a broad green patch of waste land before the doors; and one side of the verdant lane, which makes the principal street, is skirted by the palings of the lesser park, which is not devoted to the deer. The steward's house, and the clergyman's, are the only ones—

(save the manor-house itself)—aspiring to gentility. And here, nevertheless, did Dame Nature find her varieties—many were they and duly contrasted, when first, in the boundless sociability of childhood, we courted the friendship of every villager. The sturdy keeper, a stalwart man and a burley, whose name was an heirloom on the estates; and who, many years afterwards, under another lord, perished in a memorable fray with the implacable poachers;—the simple, horn-eyed idiot, basking before the gardener's door, where he lodged—a privileged pensioner, sitting hour after hour, from sun-rise to sunset—what marvels did not that strange passive existence create in us—the young, the buoyant, the impetuous! how we used to gather round him, and gaze, and wonder how he could pass his time without either work or play!—the one Patriarch beggar of the place, who seemed to beg from vanity not from want; for, as he doffed his hat, his long snow-white locks fell, parted on either side, down features of apostolic beauty—and many an artist had paused to sketch the ve-

nerable head;—the single Lais of the place, stout and sturdy, with high cheekbones and tempting smile, ill-favoured enough it is true, but boasting her admirers;—the genius, too, of the village —a woman with but one hand, who could turn that hand to any thing; nominally presiding over the dairy, she was equally apt at all the other affairs of the public life of a village.— Dogs, cows, horses—none might be ill or well without her august permission; in every quarrel she was witness, juryman, and judge. Never had any one more entirely the genius of action: she was always in every thing, and at the head of every thing—mixing, it is true, with all her energy and arts, a wonderful fidelity and spirit of clanship towards her employer. Tall, dark, and muscular was she; a kind of caught-and-tamed Meg Merriles!

But our two especial friends were an old couple, quartered in a little angle of the village, who, hard on their eightieth year, had jogged on, for nearly sixty revolutions of the sun, hand in hand together, and never seemed to have stum-

bled on an unkind thought towards each other. The love of those two old persons was the most perfect, the most beautiful I ever beheld. Their children had married and grown up and left them—they were utterly alone. Their simple affections were all in all to them. They had never been to London, never above fifteen miles from the humble spot where they had been born, and where their bones were to repose. Them the march of Knowledge had never reached. They could neither read nor write. Old Age had frozen up the portals of Intellect before the schoolmaster had gone his rounds. So ignorant were they of the world, that they scarce knew the name of the king. Changes of ministry, peace and war, the agitations of life, were as utter nothings to them—as to the wildest savage of Caffraria. Few, as the Arithmetic of Intellect can comprise, were their ideas; but they wanted not to swell the sum, for the ideas were centred, with all that the true sentiment of love ever taught the wisest, within each other. If out of that circle extended their radii of love, it was to

the family under whom they had vegetated, and to us who were its young hopes. Us indeed they did love warmly, as something that belonged to them. And scarcely a day ever passed —but what, in all the riot and glee of boyhood, with half a score of dogs at our heels—we used to rush into the quiet of that lonely cottage—scrambling over the palings—bustling through the threshold—sullying, with shoes that had made a day's circuit through all the woods and plantings, the scrupulous cleanliness of the hearth, and making their old hearts glad, and proud, and merry by the very discomfort we occasioned. Then were the rude chairs drawn into the jaws of that wide ingle nook—then was the new log thrown on the hearth—then would the old dame insist upon chafing our hands numbed with the cold, as one of us—ah, happiest he!—drew forth the fragment of cake, or the handful of figs and raisins—brought to show that they had not been forgotten. And, indeed, never were they forgotten by a more powerful hand and a more steady heart than ours, for daily from the

hall came the savoury meal which, the old woman carved tenderly for her husband, (for his hands were palsied,) and until his appetite was sated, sate apart and refused to share. Old Age, so seldom unselfish !—and the old age of the poor peasant woman, how many young hearts full of the phrases of poetry and the mockeries of sentiment, would it have shamed !

I see the old man now in a great high-backed tapestry chair, which had been a part of the furniture of the old manor house: in his youth he had been on the sporting establishment of a former squire, my grandfather's predecessor and uncle, and he had contrived to retain still, fresh and undimmed, through how many years Time might forget to register, a habit of green velvet, whose antiquated cut suited well his long grey locks and venerable countenance. Poor Newman Hagar ! a blessing on that old head—surely you are living yet!—while I live, you are not all vanished—all swallowed up by the oblivious earth. And, even after I have joined you, this page, surviving both, shall preserve you

amongst those whom the world does not willingly let perish! And on the opposite side of the hearth sate the partner of that obscure and harmless existence, with a face which, when *we* were there, never was without a smile at our presence, or a tear for our parting. Plain though her features must ever have been, and worn and wrinkled as they were then, I never saw a countenance in which not the *intellect*, but the *feeling* of our divine nature, had left a more pleasant and touching trace.

Sometimes, as the winter day closed in, and dogs and children crowded alike round the comfortable fire, we delighted to make the old man tell us of his dim memories of former squires— the notes of bugles long silenced—the glories of coaches and six long vanished—how the squire was dressed in scarlet and gold—and how my lady swept the avenues in brocade. But pleasanter to me, child as I was, was it to question the good old folks of their own past fortunes — of their first love, and how they came to marry, and how, since, they had weathered the winds of the changing world.

" And I dare say you have scolded your wife very often, Newman," said I once: Old Newman looked down, and the wife took up the reply.

" Never to signify—and if he has, I deserved it."

" And I dare say, if the truth were told, you have scolded him quite as often."

" Nay," said the old woman, with a beauty of kindness which all the poetry in the world cannot excel, " how can a wife scold her good man, who has been working for her and her little ones all the day? It may be for a man to be peevish, for it is he who bears the crosses of the world; but who should make him forget them but his own wife? And she had best, for her own sake—for nobody can scold much when the scolding is only on one side."

Who taught this poor woman her wisdom of Love? Something less common than ordinary Nature, something better than mere womanhood. For, verily, there are few out of novels to whom

either Nature or Womanhood hath communicated a similar secret!

And we grew up from children to boys—from boyhood to youth. And old Hagar died—he died during my absence; and when I returned—I called at the old woman's solitary house—I opened the latch—there she sate by the hearth with dull, lack-lustre eyes. And Newman's high chair was opposite in the accustomed place, and the green velvet habit was folded carefully on the seat. Poor old woman! her pleasure at seeing me could be revived no more. She was past all pleasure. Year after year Time had essayed in vain to numb her gentle feelings and kindly sympathies: but one single hour—that had taken from her side its helpmate—had done the allotted task. Newman was dead—and the widow could feel no more. She lived on—but it was clockwork. She did not seem to mourn for him—so much as to be indifferent to every thing else. Once only I saw her weep—it was when, out of compassion for her solitary age, we wished to

place a companion—a nurse in the cottage. "The sooner I'm dead the better," she said. "How can I bear to see a strange face where the old man used to sit?"

It is over now—the broken bridge is past—they are again united. If I were an Atheist for myself I would still pray that there may be a heaven for the Poor! Without another world, who can solve the riddle of the disparities of this?

How many hours in the summer nights have I passed in the churchyard, which lies embedded in that green and venerable park! There, no unseemly decorations maintain, after the great era of Equality has commenced, the paltry distinctions of the Past;—distinctions of a day—the Equality of the Eternal! There, for the most part unmarked and unrecorded, rise the green hillocks of the humble dead—or, where the stone registers a little while the forgotten name and departed date, the epitaph is simple and the material rude. It is the very model—the very ideal, of the country church; so quiet is it—so solitary—so ancient—so unadorned. It is the

spot above all others where Death teaches—not as the spectre, but the angel; obtruding on us no unreal terror, but eloquent with its great and tender moral of "*Repose.*" And who has not felt his heart echo to that saying of the brilliant Frenchwoman's,* half intended as a point, but carried by nature, against the very will of the speaker, into a homely and most touching truth; "At times I feel the want to die, as the wakeful feel the want to sleep!"

This is the justest of similes—worn, wearied, and sated, who has not felt the want to die, as the wakeful the want to sleep? But this is not the lesson which, after a little thought, the true morality of the Grave bequeaths. No, it is from Death that we extract the noble and magnificent lesson of life. Awed by the sense of its shortness, we turn away elevated also by its objects. If short, let us crowd it with generous and useful deeds—if eternity be at hand, let us prepare ourselves for its threshold, by the aims and ends which are most worthy of the soul; and by the

* Madame du Deffand.

glory of our own thoughts and our own deeds, walk naturally as it were to the Immortal. Filling ourselves with this ambition, we rise beyond our sorrows and our cares—we conquer the morbid darkness that satiety gathers round us, and take from the Dead a moral won from their spirits and not their dust. He who fails in this, penetrates not the true philosophy of the tomb.

The churchyard—the village—the green sward—the woods—the fern-covered hills—the water-side, odorous with the reeds and thyme—the deep-shagged dells—the plain where the deer couch,—all united and blended together, make to me, the place above all others, which renews my youth and redeems it from the influences of the world. All know some such spot—blessed—and blessing;—the Kaäba of the Earth—the scene of their childhood—the haunt of their fondest recollections. And while it is yet ours to visit it at will—while it yet rests in the dear and sacred hands to which it belonged of yore—while no stranger sits at the hearth, and no new tenants chase away "the old familiar

he were not unprotected—as if fate pı
a sanctuary to the fugitive—and life, a f
to the weary?

A blessing upon that Home, and uı
owner! In the presence of a Mother v
that our childhood has not all departe
is as a barrier between ourselves and tl
vance of Time. Chased and wearied o
the Cares of Manhood, we enter the t
dedicated to Youth,—("a guardian sta
near us,"*)—and our persecutors sleep
we linger at the altar.

* Æschylus—The Furies.

THE

CHOICE OF PHYLIAS.

A TALE.

THE

CHOICE OF PHYLIAS.

PHYLIAS was a young Athenian, whom the precepts of Socrates had reared in the two great principles (or rather, perhaps, affections) which a State should encourage in her sons—the desire of Glory, and the worship of Virtue. He wished at once to be great and to be good. Unfortunately Phylias nourished a third wish, somewhat less elevated, but much more commonly entertained—the wish to be loved! He had a strong thirst for general *popularity* as

well as *esteem;* and to an aspiring soul he united a too-susceptible heart.

One day, as he was wandering amongst the olive-groves that border Cephisus, and indulging in those reveries on his future destiny which make the happiest prerogative of the young, his thoughts thus broke into words:—

"Yes, I will devote my life to the service of my countrymen: I will renounce luxury and ease. Not for me shall be the cooks of Sicily, or the garlands of Janus. My chambers shall not steam with frankincense, nor resound with the loud shouts of Ionic laughter. No; I will consecrate my youth to the pursuit of wisdom, and the practice of virtue; so shall I become great, and so beloved. For when I have thus sacrificed my enjoyments to the welfare of others, shall they not all honour and esteem me? Will they not insist that I take the middle couch at the public festivals? and will not all the friends of my youth contend which shall repose upon my bosom? It is happy to be virtuous; but, O

Socrates, is it not even happier to be universally beloved for your virtue?"

While Phylias was thus soliloquizing, he heard a low sweet laugh beside him; and, somewhat startled at the sound—for he had fancied himself entirely alone—he turned hastily round, and beheld a figure of very singular appearance. It was a tall man, in the prime of life; but one side of the face and form was utterly different from the other: on one side the head was crowned with the festive wreath—the robes flowed loose and disordered—joy and self-complacency sparkled on the smiling countenance. You beheld a gaiety which you could not help liking; but an air of levity which you could not respect. Widely contrasted was the other half of this strange apparition: without crown or garland, after the fashion of a senator of the Areopagus, flowed the sober locks; the garb was costly, but decent and composed; and in the eye and brow the aspect was dignified and lofty, but somewhat pensive, and clouded either by thought or care: in the one half you beheld a

boon companion, whom you would welcome and forget—in the other a lofty monitor, from whom you shrank in unacknowledged fear, and whom even in esteeming you were willing carefully to shun.

"And who art thou? And from what foreign country comest thou?" asked the Athenian, in astonishment and awe.

"I come from the land of the Invisibles," answered the apparition: "and I am thy tutelary demon. Thou art now of that age, and hast attained to that height of mind, in which it is permitted me to warn and to advise thee. What vain dreams, O Phylias, have crept into thy mind! Dost thou not see that thou art asking two boons utterly incompatible with each other—universal fame and universal regard? Take thy choice of either; thou canst not combine both. Look well at the guise and garb in which I appear to thee; if thou wouldst be loved, thou seest in one half of me the model which thou shouldst imitate; if renowned, the other half presents thee also with an example.

But how canst thou hope to unite both? Look again; can any contrast be stronger? Can any opposites be more extreme? Waste not thy life in a chimera. Be above thy race, and be hated; be of their own level, and be loved. Thou hast thy choice!"

"False demon!" answered Phylias; "thou wouldst sicken me of life itself couldst thou compel me to be hated on the one hand, or worthy to be despised on the other. Thou knowest not my disposition. It hath in it nothing cynical or severe; neither should I presume upon any distinction I might attain. Why should men hate me merely for *proving* the sincerity of my affection to them? Away! thou utterest folly or fraud, and art not of that good race of demons of which Socrates was wont to speak."

Once more the demon laughed. "Thou wilt know me better one of these days; and what now thou deemest *folly*, thou wilt then term *experience*. Thou resolvest, then, to seek for glory?"

"With my whole soul!" cried the Athenian.

"Be it so; and from time to time contrast thyself with Glaucus. Farewell!"

The apparition vanished: musing and bewildered Phylias returned home.

His resolutions were not shaken, nor his ambition damped. He resigned the common pleasures of his youth; he braced his limbs by hardihood and temperance, and fed the sources of his mind from the quiet fountain of wisdom.

The first essays of his ambition were natural to his period of life. He went through the preparatory exercises, and entered himself a candidate for the victoral crown at the Olympic Games. On the day preceding that on which the Games commenced, Phylias met amongst the crowd, which a ceremony of such brilliant attraction had gathered together at Olympia, a young man whom he had known from his childhood. Frank in his manner, and joyous in his disposition, Glaucus was the favourite of all who knew him.

Though possessed of considerable talents, no

one envied him; for those talents were never exerted in order to distinguish himself—his ambition was to amuse others. He gave way to every caprice of his own or of his comrades, provided that it promised pleasure. Supple and versatile, even the sturdiest philosophers were charmed with his society; and the loosest profligates swore sincerely that they loved, because they were not driven to respect, him. His countenance never shamed them into a suspicion that their career was ignoble; and they did justice to his talents, because they could sympathize with his foibles.

"You do not contend for any of the prizes, I think," said Phylias; "for I do not remember to have seen you at the preparatory exercises?"

"Not I, by Hercules," answered Glaucus, gaily. "I play in the Games the part I play in Life—I am merely a spectator. Could I drink more deeply, or sleep more soundly, if my statue were set up in the sacred wood? Alas! no. Let my friends love Glaucus their comrade—not hate Glaucus their rival. And you?"

"I am a competitor in the chariot race."

"Success to you! I shall offer up my sacrifice for your triumph; meanwhile I am going to hear Therycides read his new play. Farewell!"

"What a charming person is Glaucus!" thought Phylias.

Even Phylias liked Glaucus the better for knowing Glaucus was not to be his antagonist.

The morning rose—the hour of trial came on. With a flushed cheek, and a beating heart, Phylias mounted his chariot. He was successful: his locks were crowned with the olive-wreath. He returned to Athens amidst the loudest acclamations. His chariot rolled through the broken wall of his native city; the poets lauded him to the skies. Phylias had commenced the career of fame; and its first fruits were delicious. His parents wept with joy at his triumph; and the old men pointed him out as a model to their sons. Sons hate models; and the more Phylias was praised, the more

his contemporaries disliked him. When the novelty of success was cooled, he began to feel that the olive-crown had its thorns. If he met his young friends in the street, they saluted him coldly: "We do not ask you to come to us," said they; "you have weightier matters on hand than our society can afford. We are going to sup with Glaucus: while you are meditating, we suppose, the best way to eclipse Alcibiades."

Meetings like these threw an embarrassment over the manner of Phylias himself. He thought that he was ill-treated, and retired into the chamber of pride. He became shy, and he was called supercilious.

The Olympic Games do not happen every day, and Phylias began to feel that he who is ambitious has no option between excitement and exhaustion. He therefore set about preparing himself for a nobler triumph than that of a charioteer; and from the government of horses aspired to the government of men. He fitted himself for the labours of public life, and the

art of public speaking. He attended the popular assemblies—he rose into repute as an orator.

Every one knows that at that time Athens was torn by intestine divisions. Alternately caressing and quarrelling with the passionate Alcibiades, his countrymen now saw him a foe in Sparta, and now hailed him a saviour in Athens. Phylias, dreading the ambition of that unprincipled genius, and yet resisting the encroaching tyranny of the four hundred rulers, performed the duty of a patriot, and, pleading for liberty, displeased both parties. Nothing could be more disinterested than his conduct, or more admired than his speeches. He proved his virtue, and he established his fame; and wherever he went he was universally abused.

He frequently met with Glaucus, who, taking no share in politics, was entertained by all parties, and the most popular man of Athens, because the most unobtrusive.

"You are become a great man now," said Glaucus to him one day; "and you will doubt-

less soon arrive at the last honour Athens can confer upon her children. Your property will be confiscated, and your person will be exiled."

"No!" said Phylias, with generous emotion; "truth is great, and must prevail. Misinterpretation and slander will soon die away, and my countrymen will do me justice."

"The gods grant it!" said the flattering Glaucus. "No man merits it more."

In the short intervals of repose that public life allowed to the Athenians, Phylias contrived to fall in love.

Chyllene was beautiful as a dream. She was full of all amiable qualities; but she was a human being, and fond of an agreeable life.

In his passion for Chyllene, Phylias, for the first time in his career, found a rival in Glaucus; for love was the only passion in which Glaucus did not shun to provoke the jealousy of the powerful. Chyllene was sorely perplexed which to choose: Phylias was so wise, but then Glaucus was so gay; Phylias was so distinguished, but then Glaucus was so popular; Phylias made

excellent speeches,—but then how beautifully Glaucus sung!

Unfortunately, in the stern and manly pursuits of his life, Phylias had necessarily outgrown those little arts of pleasing which were so acceptable to the ladies of Athens. He dressed with a decorous dignity, but not with the studied, yet easy, graces of Glaucus. How, too, amidst all his occupations, could he find the time to deck the doors of his beloved with garlands, to renew the libations on her threshold, and to cover every wall in the city with her name added to the flattering epithet of καλη. But none of these important ceremonies were neglected by Glaucus, in whom the art to please had been the sole study of life. Glaucus gained ground daily.

"I esteem you beyond all men," Chyllene could say to Phylias without a blush. But she trembled, and said nothing, when Glaucus approached.

"I love you better than all things!" said Glaucus, passionately, one day to Chyllene.

"I love you better than all things, save my country," said Phylias the same morning.

"Ah, Phylias is doubtless the best patriot," thought Chyllene; "but Glaucus is certainly the best lover!"

The very weaknesses of Glaucus were charming, but his virtues gave Phylias a little of austerity. With Phylias Chyllene felt ashamed of her faults; with Glaucus she was only aware of her excellence.

Alcibiades was now the idol of Athens. He prepared to set out with a hundred ships for the Hellespont, to assist the allies of Athens. Willing to rid the city of so vigilant a guard upon his actions as Phylias, he contrived that the latter should be appointed to a command in the fleet. The rank of Glaucus obtained him a lesser but distinguished appointment.

Chyllene was in danger of losing both her lovers.

"Wilt thou desert me?" said she to Phylias.

"Alas! my country demands it. I shall return to thee covered with laurels."

"And thou, Glaucus?"

"Perish Alcibiades, and Greece herself, before I quit thee!" cried Glaucus, who, had there been no mistress in the case, would never willingly have renounced luxury for danger.

Phylias, with a new incentive to glory, and a full confidence in the sympathy of his beloved, set out for Andria. Glaucus was taken suddenly ill, remained at home, and a month afterwards his bride Chyllene was carried by torchlight to his house. It is true that every body at Athens detected the imposition; but every one laughed at it good-humouredly; "for Glaucus," said they, "never set up for a paragon of virtue!" Thus his want of principle was the very excuse for wanting it.

The expedition to Andria failed—Alcibiades was banished again—and Phylias, though he had performed prodigies of valour, shared in the sentence of his leader. His fellow-citizens were too glad of an excuse to rid themselves of that unpleasant sensation which the superiority of another always inflicts on our self-love.

Years rolled away. Phylias had obtained all that his youth coveted of glory. Greece rang with his name; he was now aged, an exile, and a dependent at the Persian court. There, every one respected, but no one loved him. The majesty of his mien, the simplicity of his manners, the very splendour of his reputation, made the courtiers of Persepolis uneasy in his presence. He lived very much alone; and his only recreation was in walking at evening amongst the alleys of a wood, that reminded him of the groves of Athens, and meditating over the past adventures of his life.

It happened that at this time Glaucus, who had survived both his wife and his patrimony, had suffered himself, under the hope of repairing his broken fortunes, to be entrapped into a conspiracy to restore the Oligarchy, after the death of Conon. He was detected, and his popularity did not save him from banishment. He sought refuge at Persepolis: the elastic gaiety of his disposition still continued, and over his grey hairs yet glowed the festive chaplet of

roses. The courtiers were delighted with his wit—the king could not feast without him:—they consulted Phylias, but they associated with Glaucus.

One evening as Phylias was musing in his favourite grove, and as afar off he heard the music and the merriment of a banquet, (held by the king in his summer-house, and with Glaucus at his right hand,) the melancholy exile found himself gently plucked by the hem of his garment. He turned hastily round, and once more beheld his genius.

"Thy last hour fast approaches," said the demon; "again, then, I come to visit thee. At the morning of life I foretold that fate which should continue to its close: I bade thee despair of uniting celebrity and love. Thou hast attempted the union—what hath been thy success?"

"Mysterious visitor!" answered Phylias, "thy words were true, and my hope was formed in the foolishness of youth. I stand alone, honoured and unloved. But surely this is not

the doom of all who have pursued a similar ambition."

"Recollect thyself," replied the phantom: "was not thy master Socrates persecuted unto death, and Aristides ostracised on account of his virtues? Canst thou name one great man who in life was not calumniated for his services? Thou standest not alone. To shine is to injure the self-love of others; and self-love is the most vindictive of human feelings."

"Yet had I not been an Athenian," murmured Phylias, "I might have received something of gratitude."

"They call Athens ungrateful," answered the spectre; "but every where, while time lasts, the ingratitude shall be the same. One state may exile her illustrious men, another merely defame them; but day is not more separate from night, than true fame from general popularity."

"Alas! thou teachest a bitter lesson," said Phylias, sighing; "better, then, to renounce the glory which separates us from the indulgent

mercies of our kind. Has not my choice been an *error*, as well as a *misfortune?*"

The countenance of the genius became suddenly divine. Majesty sat upon his brow, and unspeakable wisdom shone from his piercing eyes, as he replied, "Hark! as thou askest of me thy unworthy question, the laugh of the hoary Glaucus breaks upon thy ear. The gods gave to him the privilege to be beloved—and despised. Wouldst thou, were the past at thy control,—wouldst thou live the life that he hath lived? wouldst thou, for the smiles of revellers, or for the heart of the mistress of thy manhood, feel that thy career had been worthless, and that thy sepulchre should be unknown? No; by the flush upon thy cheek, thou acknowledgest that to the great the pride of recollection is sufficient happiness in itself. Thy *only* error was in this,—the wish to obtain the fleeting breath of popular regard, as the *reward* for immortal labours. The illustrious should serve the world, unheeding of its frail applause. The whisper of their own hearts should convey to them a diviner

music than the huzzas of crowds. Thou shouldst have sought *only* to be great, so would it never have grieved thee to find thyself unbeloved. The soul of the great should be as a river, rejoicing in its mighty course, and benefiting all —nor conscious of the fading garlands which perishable hands may scatter upon its tide."

The corpse of Phylias was found that night in the wood by some of the revellers returning home. And the Persian king buried the body in a gorgeous sepulchre, and the citizens of Athens ordained a public mourning for his death. And to the name of Phylias a thousand bards promised immortality—and, save in this momentary record, the name of Phylias has perished from the earth!

LAKE LEMAN,

AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

LAKE LEMAN,

AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

There are some places in the world, which imaginative persons, who contract a sympathy with Genius, feel it almost a duty to visit. Not to perform such pilgrimages, seems a neglect of one of the objects of life. The world has many a Mecca and many a Medina for those who find a prophet in Genius, and an holiness in its sepulchre. Of these none are more sacred than

"Leman with its crystal face."

The very name of that lovely lake is a poem in itself. It conjures up the living and actual shapes of those who have been greater than

their kind. As the thought of Troy brings before us at once the bright Scamander—the heaven-defended towers—the hum of the wide Grecian camp—with the lone tent of Achilles, sullen at his loss—and the last interview of Hector and her to whom he was "father, mother, brethren"—so with the very name of Leman rise up—the rocks of Meillerie—the white walls of Chillon—we see the boat of Byron, with the storm breaking over Jura—the "covered acacia walk"—in which, at the dead of night, the Historian of Rome gazed upon the waters after he had finished the last page of his deathless work: Voltaire, Rousseau, Calvin—beings who were revolutions in themselves—are summoned before us. Yes, Leman is an epic; poetical in itself, it associates its name with the characters of poetry;—and all that is most beautiful in nature is linked with all that is most eloquent of genius.

The morning after my arrival at the inn, which is placed (a little distance from Geneva,) on the margin of the lake, I crossed to the house which Byron inhabited, and which is al-

most exactly opposite. The day was calm but gloomy, the waters almost without a ripple. Arrived at the opposite shore, you ascend, by a somewhat rude and steep ascent, to a small village, winding round which, you come upon the gates of the house. On the right-hand side of the road, as you thus enter, is a vineyard, in which, at that time, the grapes hung ripe and clustering. Within the gates are some three or four trees, ranged in an avenue. Descending a few steps, you see in a small court before the door, a rude fountain; it was then dried up—the waters had ceased to play. On either side is a small garden branching from the court, and by the door are rough stone seats. You enter a small hall, and, thence, an apartment containing three rooms. The principal one is charming,—long, and of an oval shape, with carved wainscoating—the windows on three sides of the room command the most beautiful views of Geneva, the Lake, and its opposite shores. They open upon a terrace paved with stone; on that terrace how often he must have "watched

with wistful eyes the setting sun!" It was here that he was in the ripest maturity of his genius —in the most interesting epoch of his life. He had passed the bridge that severed him from his country, but the bridge was not yet broken down. He had not yet been enervated by the soft south. His luxuries were still of the intellect—his sensualism was yet of nature—his mind had not faded from its youthfulness and vigour—his was yet the season of hope rather than of performance, and the world dreamt more of what he would be than what he had been.

His works (the Paris edition) were on the table. Himself was everywhere! Near to this room is a smaller cabinet, very simply and rudely furnished. On one side, in a recess, is a bed,—on the other, a door communicates with a dressing-room. Here, I was told, he was chiefly accustomed to write. And what works? "Manfred," and the most beautiful stanzas of the third Canto of "Childe Harold," rush at once upon our memory. You now ascend the stairs, and pass a passage, at the end of which

is a window, commanding a superb view of the Lake. The passage is hung with some curious but wretched portraits. Francis I., Diana of Poitiers, and Julius Scaliger among the rest. You now enter his bed-room. Nothing can be more homely than the furniture; the bed is in a recess, and in one corner an old walnut-tree bureau, where you may still see written over some of the compartments, "Letters of Lady B——." His imaginary life vanishes before this simple label, and all the weariness, and all the disappointment of his real domestic life come sadly upon you. You recall the nine executions in one year—the annoyance and the bickering, and the estrangement, and the gossip scandal of the world, and the "Broken Household Gods." * Men may moralize as they will, but misfortunes cause error,—and atone for it.

I wished to see no other rooms but those oc-

* "I was disposed to be pleased. I am a lover of Nature and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue, and welcome privation, and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. But in all this, the recollection of bitterness, and more especially of recent and

cupied by him. I did not stay to look at the rest. I passed into the small garden that fronts the house—here was another fountain which the Nymph had *not* deserted. Over it drooped the boughs of a willow; beyond, undivided by any barrier, spread a vineyard, whose verdant leaves and laughing fruit, contrasted somewhat painfully with the associations of the spot. The Great Mother is easily consoled for the loss of the brightest of her children. The sky was more in harmony with the *Genius Loci* than the earth. Its quiet and gloomy clouds were reflected upon the unwrinkled stillness of the Lake; and afar, its horizon rested, in a thousand mists, upon the crests of the melancholy mountains.

The next day I was impatient to divert the

more *home desolation* which must accompany me through life, has preyed upon me here; and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory, around, above, and beneath me."—*Byron's Journal of his Swiss Tour.*

feelings which the view of Byron's villa from the garden of my lodgment occasioned, and I repaired on a less interesting pilgrimage, though to a yet more popular, and perhaps imperishable shrine. What Byron was for a season, Voltaire was for half a century: a power in himself—the cynosure of civilization—the dictator of the Intellectual Republic. He was one of the few in whom thought has produced the same results as action. Next to the great Reformers of Religion, who has exercised a similar influence over the minds of men and the destinies of nations? Not indeed according to the vulgar sentiment that attributes to him and to his colleagues the *causes* of Revolution: the causes existed if no philosopher had ever lived; but he ripened and concentrated the effects. Whether for good or ill, time must yet show—this only can we say, that the evil that has resulted was not of Philosophy, but of Passion. They who prove a disease exists, are not to be blamed if, after their decease, wrong remedies are applied. The misfortune of human affairs is, that Sages point

out the rottenness of an old system—but it is quacks that build up the new. We employ the most scientific surveyors to estimate dilapidations, and the most ignorant masons to repair them. This is not the fault of the surveyor. "Les partisans de la liberté sont ceux qui détestent le plus profondément les forfaits qui se sont commis en son nom."*

The drive from Geneva to Ferney is picturesque and well cultivated enough to make us doubt the accuracy of the descriptions which proclaim the country round Ferney to have been a desert prior to the settlement of Voltaire. You approach the house by an avenue. To the left is the well known church which "Voltaire erected to God." ("Deo erexit Voltaire.") It is the mode among tourists to wonder at this piety—and to call it inconsistent with the tenets of its founder. But tourists are seldom profound inquirers. Any one, the least acquainted with Voltaire's writings, would know how little he was of an Atheist. He was too clever for such a belief. He is one of the strongest arguers

* Influence des Passions.

Philosophy possesses in favour of the existence of the Supreme Being; and much as he ridicules fanatics, they are well off from his satire, when compared with the Atheists. His zeal, indeed, for the Divine existence sometimes carries him beyond his judgment, as in that Romance, where Dr. Friend (Doctor of Divinity, and *Member of Parliament!*) converts his son *Jenni*, (what names these Frenchmen do give us!) and Jenni's friend Birton, in a dispute before a circle of savages.—Dr. Friend overthrows the sturdy atheist with too obvious an ease. In fact, Voltaire was impatient of an argument against which he invariably declared the evidence of all our senses was opposed. He was intolerance itself to a reasoner against the evidence of Reason. I must be pardoned for doing Voltaire this justice—I do not wish to leave Atheism so brilliant an authority.

Opposite to the church, and detached from the house, was once the theatre, now pulled down—a thick copse is planted on the site. I should like, I own, to have seen, even while I

and tolerably handsome, when com
the usual character of French or of S
tecture. It has been described so oft
would not go over the same ground if
possess an interest which no repetition
away. Besides, it helps to illustrate
racter of the owner. A man's house
witness of himself.

The *salle de réception* is a sm
the furniture unaltered — the same
work chairs in cabriole frames of oak—
red flowered velvet on the walls. T
apathy of the great Author to the Be
manifest in the wretched daubs on t
which would have put an English p
nervous fever to have seen every time
round—and a huge stove

picture of which tradition says that he gave the design. Herein Voltaire is depicted as presenting the "Henriade" to Apollo, while his enemies are sinking into the infernal regions, and Envy is expiring at his feet! A singular proof of the modesty of merit,—and of its toleration! So there *is* a hell then for disbelievers—in Voltaire! But we must not take such a design in a literal spirit. Voltaire was a conceited man, but he was also a consummate man of the world. We may depend upon it that he laughed himself at the whole thing as much as any one else. We may depend upon it that when the old gentleman, tapping his snuff-box, showed it to his visitors, with that visage of unutterable mockery, he said as pleasant a witticism on the subject as the wittiest of us could invent. How merry he must have been when he pointed out the face of each particular foe! How gaily he must have jested on their damnatory condition! In fact, it was one of those boyish ebullitions of caricature which are too extravagant for malice, and which, to the last, were peculiar to the great

ıorce oı ridicule too well, to mean t
self, as the stupid starers supp
ridiculous.

The bed-room joins the salon;
portraits of Frederic the Great, M
telet, and himself. The two last ha
in the edition of his works by Be
You see here the vase in which hi
placed, with the sentiment of "*Mo
partout—Mon cœur est ici.*" "A
said my companion, more wittily tha
I shall presently show,) "that his
better than his *cœur*, I doubt wheth
ference given to Ferney was worth t
Le Kain's portrait hangs over his be
was the man to appreciate an actor:
was the Shakspeare of artifice

open the windows of his favourite rooms upon the most beautiful parts of that enchanting scenery. But Voltaire's windows are all carefully turned the other way! You do not behold from them either the glorious Lake, or the haughty Alps, which (for they are visible immediately on entering the garden) might so easily have been effected. But the Lake and the Alps were not things Voltaire ever thought it necessary either to describe or study. Living in the country he was essentially the poet of cities. And even his profound investigation of men was of artificial men. Men's tastes, their errors, and their foibles, —not their hearts and their passions. If men had neither profound emotions, nor subtle and intense imaginations, Voltaire would have been the greatest painter of mankind that ever existed.

You leave the house then—you descend a few steps: opposite to you is a narrow road, with an avenue of poplars. You enter into a green, over-arching alley, which would be completely closed in by the thick-set hedge on either side, if here and there little mimic win-

dows had not been cut through the boughs; through these windows you may take an occasional peep at the majestic scenery beyond. That was the way Voltaire liked to look at Nature, through little windows in an artificial hedge! And without the hedge, the landscape would have been so glorious! This was Voltaire's favourite morning walk. At the end is a bench, upon which the great man, (and with all his deficiencies, when will France produce his equal?) was wont to sit, and think. I see him now, in his crimson and gold-laced coat—his stockings drawn half-way up the thigh—his chin resting on his long cane—that eye, light (he is misrepresented sometimes as having dark eyes) and piercing, fixed, not on the ground, nor upward, but on the space before him;—thus does the old gardener, who remembers, pretend to describe him: I see him meditating his last journey to Paris,—that most glorious consummation of a life of literary triumph which has ever been afforded to a literary man—that death which came from the poison of his own laurels.

Never did Fame illumine so intensely the passage to the grave; but the same torch that flashed upon the triumph, lighted the pyre. It was like the last scene of some gorgeous melodrame—and the very effect which most dazzled the audience was the signal to drop the curtain!

The old gardener, who is above a hundred, declares that he has the most perfect recollection of the person of Voltaire; I taxed it severely. I was surprised to hear that even in age, and despite the habit of stooping, he was considerably above the middle height. But the gardener dwelt with greater pleasure on his dress than his person; he was very proud of the full wig and the laced waistcoat, still prouder of the gilt coach and the four long-tailed horses. Voltaire loved parade—there was nothing simple about his tastes. It was not indeed the age of simplicity.

Amidst a gravel space, is a long slip of turf, untouched since it was laid down by Voltaire himself, and not far from hence is the tree he planted, fair, tall, and flourishing; at the time

I saw it, the sun was playing cheerily through its delicate leaves. From none of his works is the freshness so little faded. My visit to Byron's house of the day before, my visit now to Ferney, naturally brought the habitants of each, in contrast and comparison. In the persecution each had undergone, in the absorbing personal power which each had obtained, there was something similar. But Byron attached himself to the heart, and Voltaire to the intellect. Perhaps if Byron had lived to old age and followed out the impulses of Don Juan, he would have gradually drawn the comparison closer. And, indeed, he had more in common with Voltaire than with Rousseau, to whom he has been likened. He was above the effeminacy and the falseness of Rousseau; and he had the strong sense, and the stern mockery, and the earnest bitterness of Voltaire. Both Byron and Voltaire wanted a true mastery over the *passions*; for Byron does not paint nor arouse passion;* he paints

* Byron has been called by superficial critics, the Poet of Passion, but it is not true. To paint passion,

and he arouses *sentiment.* But in Byron sentiment itself had almost the strength and all the intensity of passion. He kindled thoughts into feelings. Voltaire had no sentiment in his writings, though not, perhaps, devoid of it in himself. Indeed he could not have been generous

as I have elsewhere said, you must paint the struggle of passion; and this Byron (out of his plays at least) never does. There is no delineation of passion in the love of Medora, nor even of Gulnare; but the sentiment in each is made as powerful as passion itself. Every where, in Childe Harold, in Don Juan, in the Eastern Tales, Byron paints sentiments, not passions. When Macbeth soliloquizes on his "way of life," he utters a sentiment;—when he pauses before he murders his King—he bares to us his passions. Othello, torn by that jealousy which is half love and half hatred, is a portraiture of passion: Childe Harold moralizing over Rome, is one of sentiment. The Poets of Passion paint various and contending emotions, each warring with the other. The Poets of Sentiment paint the prevalence of one particular cast of thought, or affection of the mind. But the crowd are too apt to confuse the two, and to call an author a passionate writer if his hero always says he is passionately in love. Few persons would allow that Clarissa and Clementina are finer delineations of passion than Julia and Haidée.

with so much delicacy, if he had not possessed a finer and a softer spirit than his works display. Still less could he have had that singular love for the unfortunate, that courageous compassion for the opprest, which so prominently illustrate his later life. No one could with less justice be called "heartless" than Voltaire. He was remarkably tenacious of all early friendships, and loved as strongly as he disdained deeply. Any tale of distress imposed upon him easily; he was the creature of impulse, and half a child to the last. He had a stronger feeling for Humanity than any of his cotemporaries: he wept when he saw Turgot, and it was in sobs that he stammered out, "Laissez-moi baiser cette main qui a signé le salut du peuple." Had Voltaire never written a line, he would have come down to posterity as a practical philanthropist. A village of fifty peasant inhabitants, was changed by him into the home of one thousand two hundred manufacturers. His character at Ferney is still that of the father of the poor. As a man, he was vain, self-confident, wayward, irascible;

kind-hearted, generous, and easily moved. He had nothing of the Mephistophiles. His fault was, that he was too human—that is, too weak and too unsteady. We must remember, that in opposing religious opinion, he was opposing the opinion of monks and Jesuits;—and Fanaticism discontented him with Christianity. Observe the difference with which he speaks of the Protestant faith—with what gravity and respect. Had he been born in England, I doubt if Voltaire had ever attacked Christianity—had he been born two centuries before, I doubt whether his spirit of research, and his daring courage, would not have made him the reformer of the church and not its antagonist. It may be the difference of time and place that makes all the difference between a Luther and a Voltaire.

As an Author, we are told that he has done many things well, none pre-eminently well—a most absurd and groundless proposition. He *has written* pre-eminently well! He is the greatest prose writer, beyond all comparison, that his country has produced. You may as well

say Swift has done nothing pre-eminently well, because he is neither so profound as Bacon, nor so poetical as Milton. Voltaire is Swift *en grand.* Swift resembles him, but ten thousand Swifts would not make a Voltaire. France may affect to undervalue the most French of her writers—France may fancy she is serving the true national genius by plagiarising from German horrors—neglecting the profundity of German genius; but with only isolated exceptions, all that of later times she has produced truly national and promising duration, is reflected and furnished forth from the peculiar qualities of Voltaire;—the political writings of Paul Courier, the poetry of Beranger, the novels of Paul de Kock. Her Romanticists are to her, what the Della Cruscans were to us: only they have this advantage—they would be immoral if they could. They have all the viciousness of the eunuch, but happily, they have his impotence also.

But this digression leads me to one whom I must except from so general a censure. From

Ferney I went to Coppet: from the least I diverted my thoughts to the most sentimental of writers. Voltaire is the moral antipodes to De Stael. The road to Coppet from Ferney is pretty but monotonous. You approach the house by a field or paddock, which reminds you of England. To the left, in a thick copse, is the tomb of Madame de Stael. As I saw it, how many of her eloquent thoughts on the weariness of life rushed to my memory! No one perhaps ever felt more palpably the stirrings of the soul within, than her whose dust lay there. Few had ever longed more intensely for the wings to flee away and be at rest. She wanted precisely that which Voltaire had—common sense. She had precisely that which Voltaire wanted—sentiment. Of the last it was well said, that he had the talent which the greater number of persons possessed in the greatest degree. Madame de Stael had the talent which few possess, but *not* in the greatest degree. For her thoughts are uncommon, but not profound; and her imagina-

tion is destitute of invention. No work so imaginative as the "Corinne" was ever so little inventive.

And now the house is before you. Opposite the entrance, iron gates admit a glimpse of grounds laid out in the English fashion. The library opens at once from the hall; a long and handsome room containing a statue of Necker: the forehead of the minister is low and the face has in it more of *bonhommie* than *esprit*. In fact, that very respectable man was a little too dull for his position. The windows look out on a gravel-walk or terrace; the library communicates with a bedroom hung with old tapestry.

In the *salle à manger* on thê first floor, is a bust of A. W. Schlegel and a print of Lafayette. Out of the billiard-room, the largest room of the suite, is the room where Madame de Stael usually slept, and frequently wrote, though the good woman who did the honours; declared, "she wrote in *all* the rooms." Her writing indeed was but an episode from her con-

versation. Least of all persons, was Madame de Stael one person as a writer, and another as a woman. Her whole character was in harmony; her thoughts always overflowed and were always restless. She assumed nothing factitious when she wrote. She wrote as she would have spoken.* Such authors are rare. On the other side of the billiard-room, is a small salon in which there is a fine bust of Necker, a picture of Baron de Stael, and one of herself in a turban. Every one knows that countenance full of power, if not of beauty, with its deep dark eyes.

* Madame de Stael wrote "*à la volée.*" "Even in her most inspired compositions," says Madame Necker de Saussure, "she had pleasure to be interrupted by those she loved." There are some persons whose whole life is inspiration. Madame de Stael was one of these. She was not of that tribe who labour to be inspired, who darken the room and lock the door, and entreat you not to disturb them. It was a part of her character to care little about her works once printed. They had done their office, they had relieved her mind, and the mind had passed onward to new ideas. For my own part, I have no patience with authors who are always invoking the ghosts of their past thoughts.

Here is still shown her writing-book and ink-stand. Thoughout the whole house is an air of English comfort and quiet opulence. The furniture is plain and simple — nothing overpowers the charm of the place; and no undue magnificence diverts you from the main thought of the genius to which it is consecrated. The grounds are natural, but not remarkable. A very narrow but fresh streamlet borders them to the right. I was much pleased by the polished nature of a notice to the people not to commit depredations. The proprietor put his "grounds under the protection" of the visitors he admitted. This is in the true spirit of aristocratic breeding.

It is impossible to quit this place without feeling that it bequeaths a gentle and immortal recollection. Madame de Stael was the *male* Rousseau! She had all his enthusiasm and none of his meanness. In the eloquence of diction she would have surpassed him, if she had not been too eloquent. But she perfumes her violets and rouges her roses. Yet her heart

was womanly, while her intellect was masculine, and the heart dictated while the intellect adorned. She could not have reasoned, if you had silenced in her the affections. The charm and the error of her writings have the same cause. She took for convictions what were but feelings. She built up a philosophy in emotion. Few persons felt more deeply the melancholy of life. It was enough to sadden that yearning heart—the thought so often on her lips, "Jamais je n'ai été aimée comme j'aime." But, on the other hand, her susceptibility consoled while it wounded her. Like all poets, she had a profound sense of the common luxury of *being*. She felt the truth that the pleasures are greater than the pains of life, and was pleased with the sentiment of Horne Tooke when he said to Erskine, "If you had but obtained for me ten years of life in a dungeon with my books, and a pen and ink, I should have thanked you." None but the sensitive feel what a glorious possession existence is. The religion which was a part of her very nature, contributed to render to this

existence a diviner charm. How tender and how characteristic that thought of hers, that if any happiness chanced to her after her father's death, "it was to his mediation she owed it:" as if he were living!—To her he was living—in heaven! Peace to her beautiful memory! Her genius is without a rival in her own sex; and if it be ever exceeded, it must be by one more or less than woman.

The drive homeward from Coppet to Geneva is far more picturesque, than that from Ferney to Coppet. As you approach Geneva, villa upon villa rises cheerfully on the landscape; and you feel a certain thrill as you pass the house inhabited by Marie Louise after the fall of Napoleon. These excursions in the neighbourhood of Geneva, spread to a wider circle the associations of the Lake;—they are of Leman. And if the exiles of the earth resort to that serene vicinity, hers is the smile that wins them. She received the persecuted and the weary—they repaid the benefit in glory.

It was a warm, clear, and sunny day, on

which I commenced the voyage of the Lake. Looking behind, I gazed on the roofs and spires of Geneva, and forgot the Present in the Past. What to me was its little community of watchmakers, and its little colony of English? I saw Charles of Savoy at its gates—I heard the voice of Berthelier invoking Liberty, and summoning to arms. The struggle past—the scaffold rose—and the patriot became the martyr. His blood was not spilt in vain. Religion became the resurrection of Freedom. The town is silent—it is under excommunication. Suddenly a murmur is heard—it rises—it gathers—the people are awake—they sweep the streets—the images are broken: Farel is preaching to the council! Yet a little while, and the stern soul of Calvin is at work within those walls. The loftiest of the Reformers, and the one whose influence has been the most wide and lasting, is the earliest also of the great tribe of the persecuted the City of the Lake receives within her arms. The benefits he repaid—behold them around! Wherever property is secure, wherever

thought is free, wherever the ancient learning is revived, wherever the ancient spirit has been caught, you trace the work of the Reformation, and the inflexible, inquisitive, unconquerable soul of Calvin! He foresaw not, it is true, nor designed, the effects he has produced. The same sternness of purpose, the same rigidity of conscience that led him to reform, urged him to persecute. The exile of Bolsec, and the martyrdom of Servede, rest darkly upon his name. But the blessings we owe to the first inquirers compensate their errors. Had Calvin not lived, there would have been not one, but a thousand, Servedes! The spirit of inquiry redeems itself as it progresses; once loosed, it will not stop at the limit to which its early disciples would restrain it. Born with them, it does not grow with their growth, it survives their death —it but commences where they conclude. In one century, the flames are for the person, in another for the work; in the third, work and person are alike sacred. The same town that condemned *Le Contrat social* to the conflagra-

tion, makes now its chief glory in the memory of Rousseau.

I turned from Geneva, and the villa of Byron, and the scarce-seen cottage of Shelley glided by. Of all landscape scenery, that of lakes pleases me the most. It has the movement without the monotony of the ocean. But in point of scenic attraction, I cannot compare Leman with Como or the Lago Maggiore. If ever, as I hope my age may, it is mine to "find out the peaceful hermitage," it shall be amidst the pines of Como, with its waves of liquid sunshine, and its endless variety of shade and colour, as near to the scenes and waterfalls of Pliny's delicious fountain, as I can buy or build a tenement. There is not enough of glory in the Swiss climate. It does not bring that sense of existence—that passive luxury of enjoyment—that paradise of the air and sun, which belong to Italy.

The banks of Leman, as seen from the middle of the water, lose much of their effect from the exceeding breadth of the lake; and

alone towering by its side, would be
spectacle in the world. But the
the awe, and the undefinable sen
which belong to the sublime in nat
are lost when the objects are remo
immediate vicinity. The very infl
landscape around Leman renders it
nificent than grand. There is s
sameness too in the greater part of
unless you wind near the coast.
themselves often vary, but the etern
in the background invest the wh
common character. But to see the
greatest advantage, avoid, oh, avoi
vessel and creep close by either sho
Ouchy and Lausanne, the scenery

cloud, flinging long and far shadows over the surface. Gazing on Lausanne, I recalled the words of Gibbon; I had not read the passage for years; I could not have quoted a syllable of it the day before, and now it rushed upon my mind so accurately, that I found little but the dates to alter, when I compared my recollection with the page. "It was," said he, "on the day or rather the night of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last line of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a berceau, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waves, and all nature was silent." What a picture! Who does not enter into what must have been the feelings of a man who had just completed the work that was to render him immortal? What calm fulness of triumph, of a confidence too stately for vanity, does the description

the Capitol, while the bareheaded
singing vespers in the Temple of Ju
conclusion at the stillness and solit
amidst the Helvetian Alps. With v
collectedness of thought, he seems
luxuriate as it were in the sentimen
glory! At such a moment did Gib
his soul which produced the glory,
imperishable. For my own part, I
felt that my soul was diviner than m
the genius is but an effort of the sc
artificer is greater than the work. T
we achieve, our conquests of the
Time, can but feebly flatter our
unless we regard them as the pro
we are. For who would submit to d
the blind Nursery of Thoughts to l

is a noble contemplation, but it is nobler yet to conjecture what, *now*, may be the musings, and what the aspirations, of that spirit exalted to a sublimer career of being. It were the wildest madness of human vanity to imagine that God created such spirits *only* for the earth: like the stars, they shine upon us, but their uses and their destinies are not limited to be the lamps of this atom of creation. So vast a waste of spirit were, indeed, a monstrous prodigality, wholly alien to the economy and system of the Universe!

But new objects rise to demand the thought. Opposite are the heights of Meillerie; seen from the water, they present little to distinguish them from the neighbouring rocks. The village lies scattered at the base, with the single spire rising above the roofs. I made the boatmen row towards the shore,, and landed somewhere about the old and rugged town or village of Evian. Walking thence to Meillerie along the banks of the lake, nothing could be richer than the scene around. The sun was slowly sink-

ing, the waters majestically calm, and a long row of walnut trees fringed the margin; above, the shore slopes upward, covered with verdure. Proceeding onward, the ascent is yet more thickly wooded, until the steep and almost perpendicular heights of Meillerie rise before you—here grey and barren, there clothed with tangled and fantastic bushes. At a little distance you may see the village with the sharp spiral steeple rising sharp against the mountain; and winding farther, you may survey on the opposite shore, the immortal Clarens: and, whitely gleaming over the water, the walls of Chillon. As I paused, the waters languidly rippled at my feet, and one long rose-cloud, the immortalized and consecrated hues of Meillerie transferred from their proper home, faded lingeringly from the steeps of Jura. I confess myself, in some respects, to be rather of Scott's than Byron's opinion on the merits of the Héloise. Julie and St. Preux are to me, as to Scott, "two tiresome pedants." But they are eloquent pedants! The charm of Rousseau is not in the characters he draws, but in

the sentiments he attributes to them. I lose the individuality of the characters—I forget, I dismiss them. I take the sentiments, and find characters of my own more worthy of them. Meillerie is not to me consecrated by Julie, but by ideal love. It is the Julie of one's own heart, the visions of one's own youth, that one invokes and conjures up in scenes which no criticism, no reasoning, can divorce from the associations of love. We think not of the idealist, but the ideal. Rousseau intoxicates us with his own egotism. We are wrapt in *ourselves*—in *our own* creations, and not *his;*—so at least it was with me. When shall I forget that twilight by the shores of Meillerie—or that starlit wave that bore me back to the opposite shore? The wind breathing low from Clarens—Chillon sleeping in the distance, and all the thoughts and dreams—and unuttered, unutterable memories of the youth and passion for ever gone, busy in my soul. The place was full, not of Rousseau, but that which had inspired him—hallowed not by the Priest—but, by the God.

I have not very distinctly marked the time in which the voyage I describe was broken up; but when next I resumed my excursion it was late at noon.

I had seen at Vevay, Ludlow the regicide's tomb. A stern contrast to the *Bosquets* (now, alas! potato-grounds) of Julie. And now, from the water, the old town of Vevay seemed to me to have something in its aspect grateful to the grim shade of the King-slayer. Yet even that memory has associations worthy of the tenderness of feeling which invests the place; and one of the most beautiful instances of woman's affection, is the faithful valour with which his wife shared the dangers and vicissitudes of the republican's chequered life. His monument is built by her. And, though in a time when all the nice distinctions of justice on either side were swept away, the zeal of Ludlow wrote itself in blood that it had been more just to spare, the whole annals of that mighty war cannot furnish a more self-contemning, unpurchaseable, and honest heart. His ashes are not the least valuable relics of the shores of Leman.

Again; as you wind a jutting projection of the land, Clarens rises upon you, chiefly noticeable from its look of serene and entire repose. You see the house which Byron inhabited for some little time, and which has nothing remarkable in its appearance. This, perhaps, is the most striking part of the voyage. Dark shadows from the Alps, at the right, fell over the wave, but to the left, towards Clarens, all was bright and sunny, and beautifully still. Looking back, the lake was one sheet of molten gold—wide and vast it slept in its glory; the shore on the right indistinct from its very brightness—that to the left, marked and stern from its very shadow.

Chillon, which is long, white, and, till closely approached, more like a modern than an ancient building, is backed by mountains covered with verdure. You survey now the end of the lake; a long ridge of the greenest foliage, from amidst which the frequent poplar rises, tall and picturesque, the spire of the grove. And, now, nearing Villeneuve, you sail by the little isle hallowed by Byron–

Scarce broader than my dungeo
But in it there were three tall tr

The trees were still there, young
ing; by their side a solitary shed.
itself, backed by mountains, has a
as if vindicating the antiquity it bo

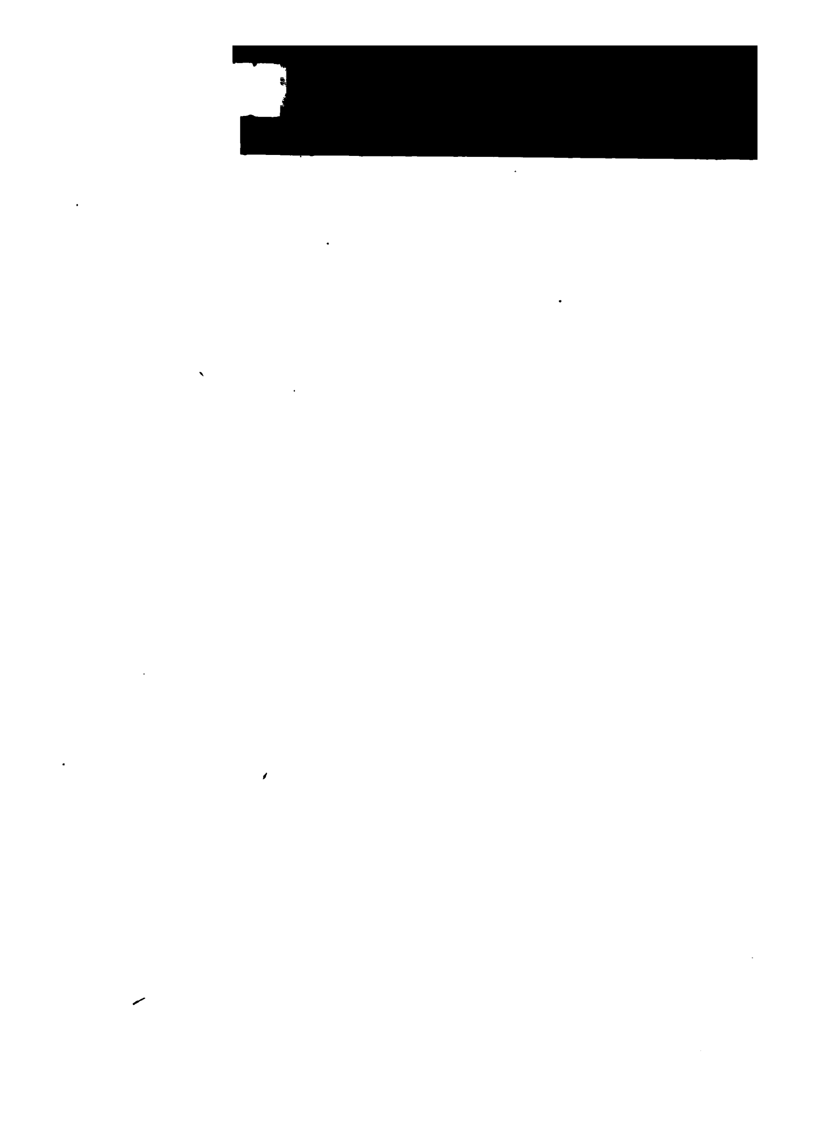
I landed with regret, even tho
grimage to Chillon was before me.
lingered by the wave—and still ga
soft expanse. Perhaps, in the va
to so many, who possess themselve
of a shadowy and unreal future,
dreamt, *as* I paused and gazed, that
the lesser names which Leman
blends with those more lofty and
may not disdainfully reject that of



THE

TRUE ORDEAL OF LOVE.

A MORAL TALE FOR MARRIED PEOPLE.





THE TRUE ORDEAL OF LOVE.

A MORAL TALE FOR MARRIED PEOPLE.

Never were two persons more passionately attached to each other than Adolphe and Celeste! Their love was a proverb. Of course it was an unhappy attachment—no body loves heartily, unless people take pains to prevent it. The spirit of contradiction is prodigiously strong in its effects.

Adolphe was rich and noble—Celeste was noble and poor. Their families were at variance; the family of Adolphe was exceedingly

ambitious, and that of Celeste exceedingly proud. Had they been the best friends in the world, their fathers would not have assented to the loves of their children—Adolphe's father because he desired a rich match for his son—Celeste's because he was too proud to be under an obligation, and he was sufficiently a man of the world to know that you are to be considered obliged when a rich nobleman marries your daughter without a dowry. Celeste's father would have married her to a wealthy *parvenu* that he might have borrowed his money, in parading his condescension. For it is a maxim in good society, that no favour can be conferred by a *roturier*. Gratitude is for him to feel, if you accept his services. No sooner therefore was the dawning attachment of the lovers discovered, than their relations thought it necessary to be amazingly angry. There cannot be a doubt that you have an absolute right to the eyes, nerves, and hearts of your children. They have no business to be happy, unless it be exactly in the way most agreeable to yourself.

These self-evident truths were not, however, irresistible for Adolphe and Celeste. Although the latter was locked up, and the former was watched; they continued often to correspond, and sometimes to see each other. Their love was no passing caprice—despite all difficulties, all obstacles, all dangers—it was more intense than ever at the end of a year. Celeste had gallantly refused two young merchants, handsome and ardent,—and a very old banker, who would have left her a widow in a year. Adolphe — the gay and handsome Adolphe—had renounced every flirtation and conquest;—all women had palled in his eyes since he had seen Celeste. But though their passion was strengthened by time, time had failed to increase their hopes of its success—they began to doubt and to despair. The rose fled from Celeste's cheek —she pined away, her lip had lost all its smile, her form shrunk from all its roundness, tears stood constantly in her eyes, and she sighed so that it went to the hearts of all the servants in the house. In fine, she fell ill,—poor girl,—she

herent—his great grandfather
Adolphe promised fairly to t
cestor.

Alarmed, but not softened, t
lover spoke to him earnestly.
this ill-placed love—if only fo
ness is the parent of this youtl
devote half my fortune to pu
situation at court you have so o
height of your ambition. M
young, bold, and aspiring; you
fame will be secured. I willing
sacrifice, provided you abandon

Adolphe wrung the hand of h
possible!" he murmured, "one
is worth all the dreams of ambit

n the country in which they were born,)—
ort, they resolved upon suicide. I wish I
een able to obtain the letters which passed
en them on this melancholy subject. I
read any so simple and so touching; if
ad seen them you would have thought it
ainest proposition in the world—that per-
with any real affection for each other,
never to be unprovided with prussic acid:
knows but what an accident may separate
of a sudden; and to be separate!—how
pleasanter to be dead!

e lovers agreed, then, to poison themselves
e same night. Their last letters were writ-
listered with each other's tears. It was
n o'clock. Adolphe had retired to his cham-
he took up the poison—he looked at it wist-
"To-morrow," said he, musingly—"to-
ow"—and he extracted the cork—"to-mor-
-it smells very disagreeably—to-morrow I
be at rest. This heart"—he shook the phial
ow it froths!—this heart will have ceased to
—and our cruel parents will not forbid us a

Meanwhile, the father and m
were still at supper. The old
wiped his eyes when Adolphe h
fidgeted to and fro, with the a
has something at his heart. A
very hungry, and his mistress
good old man was heeded
length, when the other atten
drawn, the old man lingered be
re-set the glasses—and thrice
the decanters.

"That is quite right—that w
door after you."

"Sir—yes, Sir.—Did you—h

"Did I what?"

"My young master, Sir—yes

"*Ma foi*. I was engaged with the chicken."

"And you, Madam—he kissed your hand very affectionately."

"Ah, yes, (drowsily,) he has an excellent heart, *le cher enfant!*"

"And, Madam, I don't like to say any thing—but—but—my young master has been muttering very odd things to himself for the last two or three days, and all this morning he has been poisoning the dogs by way, he said, of experiment."

"Poison!" said the mother, thoroughly awakened—"has he got any poison?"

"Ah, yes, Madam—his pockets full."

"Heavens!" cried the father, "this must not be—if he should in despair—he is a very odd boy. His great-grandfather died mad. I will instantly go to his room."

"And I too," cried the mother.

The good couple hurried to Adolphe's chamber; they heard a groan as they opened the door; they found their son stretched on the bed, pale and haggard; on the table was a phial, labelled 'poison;' the phial was empty.

dying. Leave me! Celeste
poison—we could not live
parents—we mock you, and di

"Recover—recover, my s
shall be yours," said the motl
terics.

The father was already gon
The surgeon lived near to Ce
he was hastily preparing hi
visitor had the charity to ru
of Celeste's father, and hastil
the intelligence he had learnt
gentleman hobbled off to his
Luckily he found his wife wi
been giving the *petite* good ad
a very prolix habit. Celeste

"Already!" cried Celeste, clasping her hands—"Already!—he awaits me, then. Ah, this appointment at least I will not break!" She sprang to her bedside, and seized a phial from under the pillow; but the father was in time—he snatched it from her hand, and his daughter fell into fits so violent, that they threatened to be no less fatal than the poison.

CHAPTER II.

Whatever the exaggerations of our lovers, they loved really, fervently, disinterestedly, and with all their hearts. Not one in ten thousand loves is so strong, or promises to be so lasting.

Adolphe did not die—the antidotes were given in time—he recovered. The illness of Celeste was more dangerous—she suffered, poor child, a delirious fever, and was several weeks before her life and reason were restored.

No parents could stand all this; ordinary caprices it is very well to resist, but when young people take to poison and delirious fevers—*il faut céder.* Besides, such events derange one's establishment and interrupt one's comforts. One is always glad to come to terms when one

begins to be annoyed oneself. The old people then made it up, and the young people married. As the Bridegroom and Celeste were convinced that the sole object of life was each other's company, they hastened at once to the sweet solitudes of the country. They had a charming villa and beautiful gardens—they were both accomplished—clever—amiable—young—and in love. How was it possible they should be susceptible to *ennui?* They could never bear to lose sight of each other.

"Ah, Adolphe—traitor—where hast thou been?"

"Merely shooting in the woods, my angel."

"What, and without me! Fie! promise this shall not happen again."

"Ah, dearest! too gladly I promise."

Another time—

"What, Celeste!—three hours have I been seeking for you! Where have you hid yourself?"

"Don't look so angry, my Adolphe, I was only directing the gardener to build a little ar-

eternity without you! Fro
me again, without telling r
you."

"My own dearest, dearest
love you—may my company e
you!"

This mode of life is very ch
for a few days. Adolphe a
each other so entirely, that
months. What at first was pa
habit, and each blamed the
affection, if he or she ever in
velty of different pursuits.

As they had nothing to d
those faces they had thought s
was now and then difficult not
late there had been little

"Celeste, my angel, you don't hear me. I am telling you about my travels, and you gape in my face."

"My dear Adolphe, I am so exceedingly sleepy."

One morning, as Adolphe woke and turned in his bed, his eyes rested on his wife, who was still asleep—"Bless me," thought he, "I never saw this before—let me look again—yes, certainly, she has—a wart on her chin!"

Adolphe rose and dressed himself—Adolphe was grave and meditative. They met at breakfast—the bride and bridegroom. Celeste was in high spirits, Adolphe was sombre and dejected.

"Let us ride to-day," said Celeste.

"My dear, I have a headache,"

"Poor child! well, then, let us read the new poem."

"My dear, you talk so loud."

"I!" and Celeste, gazing reproachfully on Adolphe, perceived, for the first time, something in his eyes that surprised her—she looked

wart has grown greatly since morn

It is impossible to say what
fatal discovery had upon Adolphe.
of it incessantly. He had nothin
plain of—but then warts on the
tainly not becoming. Celeste's b
proved greatly since her marriage.
else saw the improvement. Adol
thing but the wart on her chin.
plexion was more brilliant, her
rounded, her walk more majestic;
all this, when one has a wart
The wart seemed to grow bigge
every day—to Adolphe's eyes i
speedily to absorb the whole of th
he expected, in due time, to see

to herself—he smothered his pain, but he began to think it would be just as well to have separate apartments.

Meanwhile, strange to say, Adolphe's squint grew daily more decided and pronounced. "He certainly did not squint before we married," thought Celeste; "it is very unpleasant—it makes one so fidgety to be stared at by a person who sees two ways—and Adolphe has unfortunately a habit of staring. I think I might venture to hint, delicately and kindly—the habit can't yet be incurable."

As wives are always the first in the emulation of conjugal fault-finding, Celeste resolved to hazard the hint—on the first favourable opportunity.

"Well, my Celeste, I have brought my dog to see you," said Adolphe one morning.

"Ah! down, down! Pray turn him out; see the mark of his paws. I can't bear dogs, Adolphe."

"Poor thing!" said Adolphe, caressing his

"I beg your pardon, my d
you looked at me. Indeed,
truth may be said, you have
bad habit—you are getting qu
eye."

"Madam!" said Adolphe,
fended, and hurrying to the gla

"Don't be angry, my love;
mentioned it, if it did not get
it is yet to be cured, I am s
wafer on the top of your nose, a
see straight."

"A wafer on the top of m
better put one at the tip of your

"My chin!" cried Celeste,
turn to the glass, "What do you

"Only that you have a ...

"A wart on my chin—monster!"

"A cast in my eye—fool!"

"Yes! How could I ever love a man who squinted!"

"Or I a woman with a wart on her chin!"

"Sir, I shall not condescend to notice your insults. No wonder — you can't see! I pity your infirmity."

"Madam, I despise your insinuations; but since you deny the evidence of your own glass, suffer me to send for a physician, and if he can cure your deformity, so much the better for you."

"Yes, send for a physician; he will say whether you squint or not—poor Adolphe, I am not angry, no, I pity so melancholy a defect."

Celeste burst into tears. Adolphe, in a rage, seized his hat, mounted his horse, and went himself for the doctor.

The doctor was a philosopher as well as a physician—he took his pony, and ambled back with Adolphe. By the way he extracted from Adolphe his whole history, for men in a passion are easily made garrulous. "The perfidious

woman,"—said Adolphe, "would you believe it? —we braved every thing for each other—never were two persons so much in love—nay, we attempted suicide rather than endure a longer separation. I renounced the most brilliant marriages for her sake—too happy that she was mine without a dowry—and now she declares I squint. And, oh, she has *such* a wart on her chin!"

The Doctor could not very well see whether Adolphe squinted, for he had his hat over his eyes; besides he prudently thought it best to attend to one malady at a time.

"As to the wart, Sir," said he, "it is not difficult to cure."

"But if my wife won't confess that she has it, she will never consent to be cured. I would not mind if she would but own it. Oh the vanity of women!"

"It must have been after some absence that this little defect was perceived by you"—

"After absence—we have not been a day separated since we married."

'O-ho,' thought the Doctor, sinking into a reverie—I have said he was a philosopher—but it did not require much philosophy to know that persons who would have died for each other a few months ago, were not alienated only by a wart or a cast in the eye.

They arrived at Adolphe's villa—they entered the saloon. Celeste no longer wept; she had put on her most becoming cap, and had the air of an insulted but uncomplaining wife!

"Confess to the wart, Celeste, and I'll forgive all," said Adolphe.

"Nay, why so obstinate as to the cast of the eye—*I* shall not admire you less, (though others may,) if you will not be so vain as to disown it."

"Enough, Madam—Doctor, regard that lady—is not the wart monstrous—*can* it be cured?"

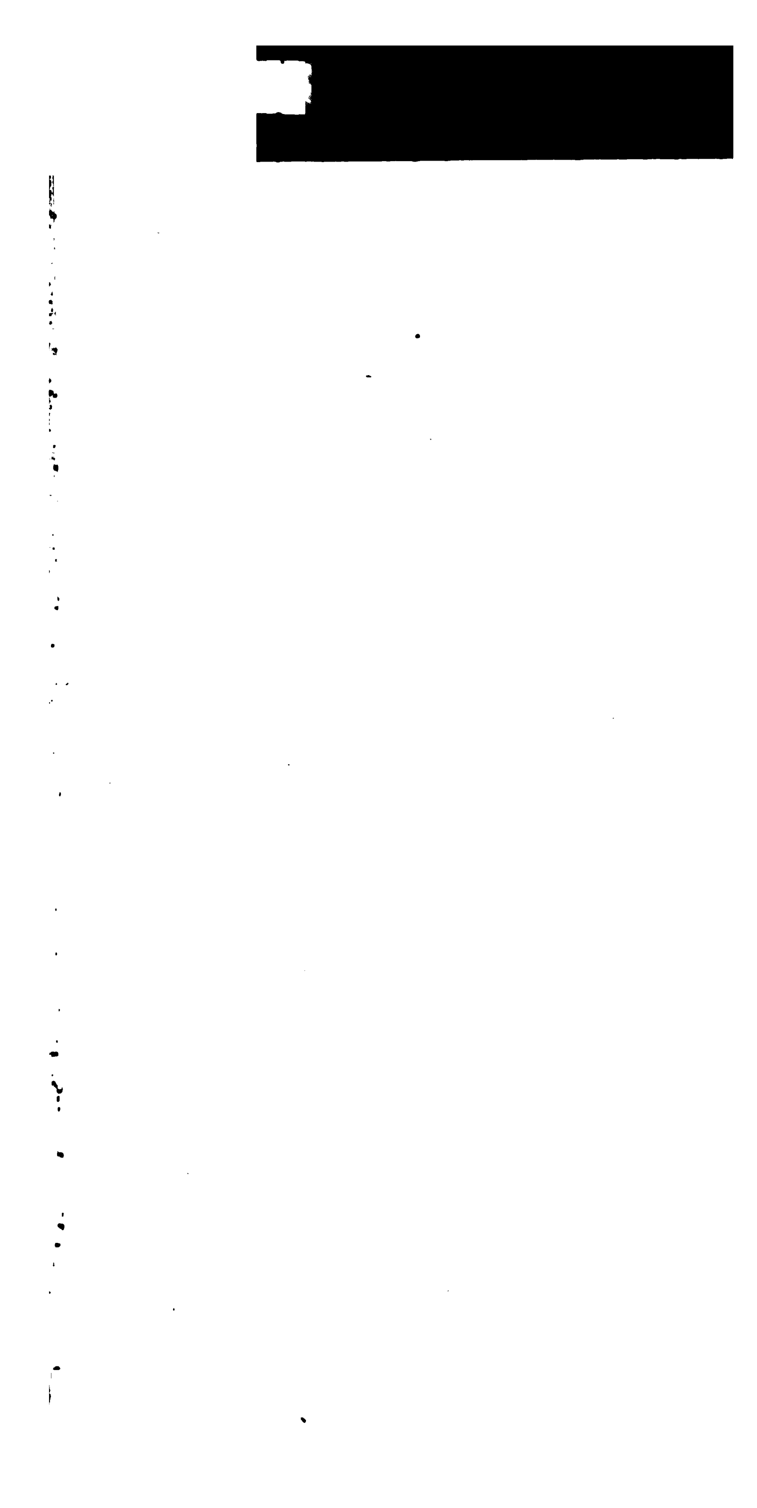
"Nay," cried Celeste, sobbing, "look rather at my poor husband's squint. His eyes were so fine before we married."

The Doctor put on his spectacles—he regarded first one and then the other.

... smaller than a pi
dam, the pupil of your hu
like that of nine person
hundredth part of an inch
the pupil of the left. This
pears to me, seeing you bo
But I do not wonder, that
pimple so enormous; and yo
so distorted, since you see
day!"

The pair were struck by a
taneous conviction;—when a
breathless, to summon Adolp
who was taken suddenly ill.
three months, Adolphe returne
had entirely vanished, and C
husband's eyes were as beautifu

die joyfully together when lovers, but prodigiously difficult, without economizing the presence, to live comfortably together when married.



ON THE

WANT OF SYMPATHY.



ON THE

WANT OF SYMPATHY.

I SMILE when I hear the young talk, in luxurious anticipation, of the delight of meeting with a wholly congenial spirit—an echo of the heart—a counterpart of self. Who ever lived that did not hope to find the phantom, and who ever lived that found it? It is the most entire and the most eternal of all our delusions. That which makes up the nature of one human being—(its nerves, sentiments, thoughts, objects, aspirations)—is infinitely multiplied and complex; formed from a variety of early circumstances,



of imperfect memories, of indistinct associations, of constitutional peculiarities, of things and thoughts appropriate only to itself, and which were never known but partially to others. It is a truism which every one will acknowledge, that no two persons were ever wholly alike, and yet every one starts from the necessary but gloomy corollary, that therefore you can never find a counterpart of yourself. And so we go on, desiring, craving, seeking, sympathy to the last! It is a melancholy instance, too, of the perversity of human wishes, that they who exact sympathy the most, are, of all, the least likely to obtain it. It is a necessary part of the yearning and wayward temperament of the poet. Exactly as he finds his finer and more subtle visions uncomprehended by the herd, he sighs for the Imagined One to whom he can pour them forth, or who can rather understand them most in silence—by an instinct—by a magnetism—by all that invisible and electric harmony of two souls, which we understand by the word 'Sympathy,' in its fullest and divinest sense. Yet in

proportion evidently to the rareness of this nature is the improbability of finding a likeness to it. And if we succeed at last, if we do find another being equally sensitive—equally wayward—equally acute and subtle—instead of sympathizing with us, it demands only sympathy for itself. The one most resembling a poet would be a poetess. And a poetess is, of all, the last who could sympathize with a poet. Two persons linked together, equally self-absorbed, morbid, susceptible, and exacting!—Mephistophiles himself could not devise a union more unhappy and more ill-assorted! It is a strange thing, that those who are most calculated to bear with genius, to be indulgent to its eccentricities and its infirmities, to foresee and forestall its wishes, to honour it with the charity and the reverence of love, are usually without genius themselves, and of an intellect comparatively mediocre and humble. It is the touching anecdote of the wife of a man of genius, that she exclaimed on her death-bed, "Ah, my poor friend, when I am no more, who will un-

derstand thee?" Yet this woman, who felt she did comprehend the nature with which her life had been linked, was of no correspondent genius. Biography that immortalizes her tenderness, is silent upon her talents. In fact, there is no real sympathy between the great man and another, but that which supplies its place is the reverent affection of admiration. And I doubt whether the propensity to venerate *persons* be a common faculty of the highest order of the mind. Such men know indeed veneration, their souls are imbued with it; but it is not for *mortals*, over whom they feel their superiority, it is for *things* abstract and incorporeal—for Glory or for Virtue—for Wisdom—for Nature, or for God. Even in the greatest men around them, their sight, unhappily too acute, penetrates to the foibles; they measure their fellow mortals by the standard of their Ideal. They are not blinded by the dazzle of genius, for genius is a thing to them household and familiar. They may pity, but they cannot admire. God and the angels compassionate our

frailties, they do not admire our powers. And they who approach the most to the Divine Intelligence, or the Angelic Holiness, behold their brethren from a height;—they may stoop from their empyreal air to cherish and to pity—but it is the things above them that they reverence and adore.

It is in a lower class of intellect, yet one not unelevated as compared with the herd, that the principle of admiration is most frequent and pervading, an intellect that seeks a monitor, a protector, a standard or a guide—one that can appreciate greatness, but has no measure within whereby to gauge its proportions. Thus we observe in biography, that the friendship between great men is rarely intimate or permanent. It is a Boswell that most appreciates a Johnson. Genius has no brother, no co-mate; the love it inspires is that of a pupil or a son. Hence, unconscious of the reasons, but by that fine intuition into nature, which surpasses all philosophy, the poets usually demand devotion, as the most

necessary attribute in their ideals of love; they ask in their mistress a being, not of lofty intellect, nor of brilliant genius, but engrossed, absorbed in them;—a Medora for the Conrade. It was well to paint that Medora in a savage island,—to exclude her from the world. In civilized life, poor creature, caps and bonnets—an opera box, and Madame Carson, would soon have shared her heart with her Corsair! Yet this species of love, tender, and unearthly though it be, is not sympathy. Conrade could not have confided in Medora. She was the mistress of his heart, not, in the beautiful Arabian phrase, "the keeper of his soul." It is the inferior natures then that appreciate, indulge, reverence, and even comprehend genius the most, and yet how much is there that to inferior natures it can never reveal! How can we pour forth all that burning eloquence of passion and memory which often weighs upon us like a burden, to one who will listen to us indeed with rapt ears, but who will long, as Boswell longed, for Mr. Somebody to be present to hear how finely we can talk?

ve have brief passages in life when we
e have attained our object; when we
ureka"—when we believe our counter-
ie wraith of our spirit, is before us!
ersons in love with each other, how conge-
y appear! In that beautiful pliancy—that
cious system of self-sacrifice which are
racter of love in its earlier stages; each
seems blended and circumfused in each
are not two natures, they are one! Seen
enchanting moonlight of delicious pas-
ll that is harsh or dissonant is mellowed
the irregularities, the angles, sleep in
; all that we behold is in harmony with
es. Then is our slightest thought pene-
our faintest desire forestalled, our suffer-
mind, or of frame, how delicately are
nsoled! Then even sorrow and sickness
ieir charm—they bring us closer under
ling wings of our Guardian Spirit. And,
iat we are, we imagine this sympathy is
ire for ever. But TIME—there is the
!—by little and little, we grow apart

from each other. The daylight of the world creeps in, the moon has vanished, and we see clearly all the jarring lines and corners hidden at first from our survey. The lady has her objects, and the gentleman his.

My lost, my buried, my unforgotten! You, whom I knew in the first fresh years of life—you, who were snatched from me before one leaf of the Summer of Youth and of Love was withered—you, over whose grave, yet a boy, I wept away half the softness of my soul;—now that I know the eternal workings of the world, and the destiny of all human ties, I rejoice that you are no more!—that custom never dulled the music of your voice—the pathos and the magic of your sweet eyes—that the halo of a dream was round you to the last! Had you survived till now, we should have survived—not our love, indeed—but all that renders love most divine—the rapt and wild idolatry that scarce believed it adored a mortal thing of frailty and of change—the exaggerated, the measureless credulity in the faith,

the virtues of each other, that almost made us what it believed, in our desire not to fall short of the god-like standard by which we were raised in our mutual eyes above the children of earth. All this,—how long since would it have passed away!—our love would have fallen into "the portion of weeds and worn out faces," which is the lot of all who love. As it is, I can transport myself from every earthly disappointment when I recur to you! On your image there rests no shadow of a shade! In my hours of sickness—in the darkness of despondency—in the fever of petty cares, and all the terrors of the future—you glide before me in your fresh youth, and with your tender smile—for from you never came the harsh word or the wronging thought. In all that I recall of you there is not one memory which I would forget. Death is the great treasure house of Love. There, lies buried the real wealth of passion and of youth; there, the heart, once so prodigal, now grown the miser, turns to contemplate the hoards it has hidden from the world.

Henceforth, it is but the common and petty coins of affection, that it wastes on the uses and things of life.

The coarser and blunter minds, intent upon common things, obtain, perhaps, a sufficient sympathy to satisfy them. The man who does nothing but hunt, will find congeniality enough wherever there are hounds and huntsmen. The woman, whose soul is in a ball-room, has a host of intimate associates, and congenial spirits. It was the man of the world who talked of his numerous friends—it was the sage who replied, sadly, "Friends! happy art thou, I have never found one!"

There are two remedies for the craving after sympathy, and the first I recommend to all literary men, as the great means of preserving the moral health. It is this; we should cultivate, besides our more intellectual objects, some pursuit which we can have in common with the herd: Some end, whether of pleasure, of business, of politics, that brings us in contact with our kind. It is in this that we can readily

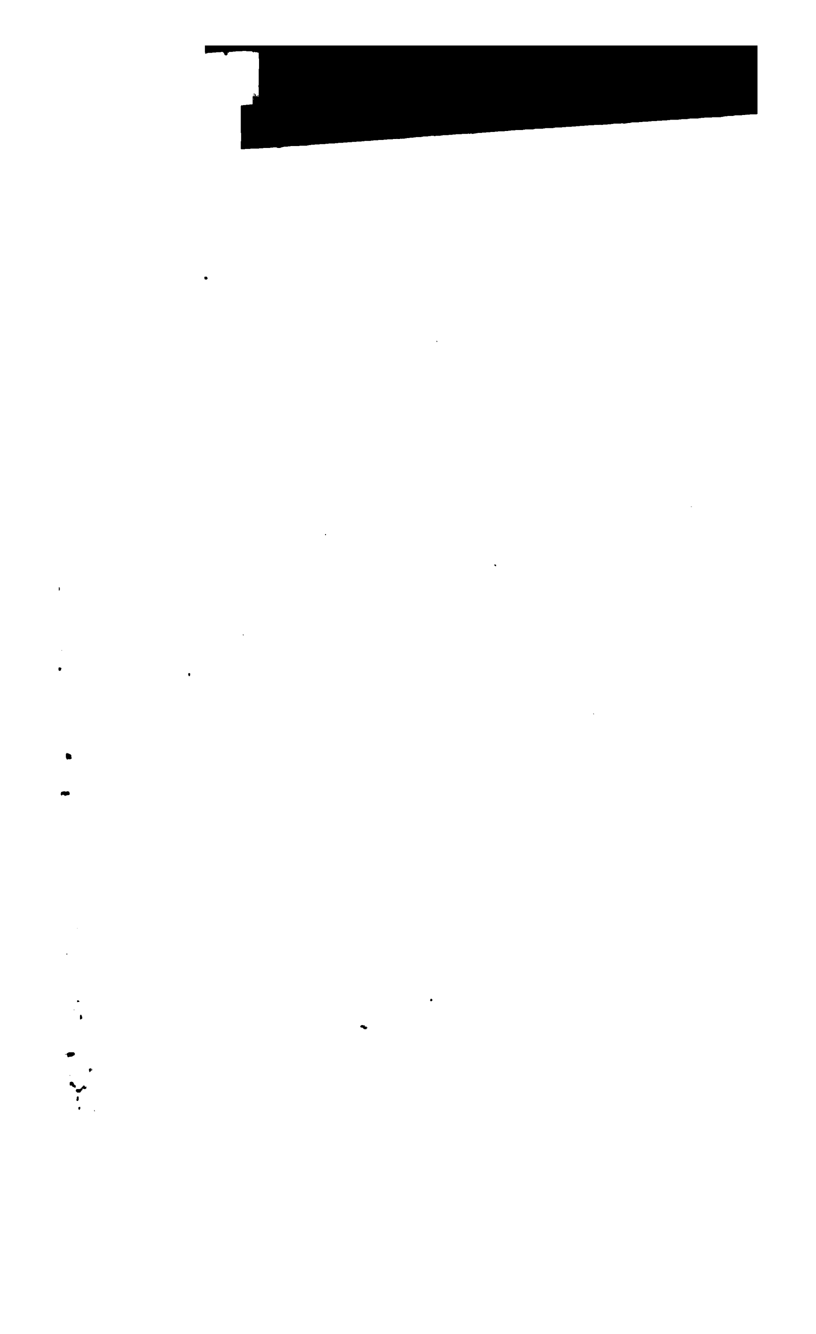
find a fellowship—in this we can form a vent for our desire of sympathy from others. And thus, we learn to feel ourselves not alone. Solitude then becomes to us a relief, and our finer thoughts are the seraphs that watch and haunt it. Our imagination, kept rigidly from the world, is the Eden in which we walk with God. For having in the crowd embraced the crowd's objects, and met with fellowship in return, we no longer desire so keenly a sympathy with that which is not common to others, and belongs to the nobler part of us. And this brings me to the second remedy. We learn thus to make our own dreams and thoughts our companion, our beloved, our Egeria. We acquire the doctrine of self-dependence,—self suffices to self. In our sleep from the passions of the world, God makes an Eve to us from our own breasts. Yet sometimes it will grieve us to think we shall return to clay, give up the heritage of life, our atoms dissolve and crumble into the elements of new things—with all the most lovely, the most spiritual part of us untold!—

What volumes can express one tithe that we have felt? How many brilliant thoughts have broke upon us—how many divinest visions have walked by our side, that would have mocked all our efforts to transfer to this inanimate page? To sit coldly down, to copy the fitful and sudden hues of those rainbow and evanescent images varying with every moment!—no! we are not all so cased in authorship, we are greater than mere machines of terms and periods. The author is inferior to the man! As the best part of Beauty is that which no picture can express,* so the best part of the Poet is that which no words have told. Had Shakspeare lived for ever, could he have exhausted his thoughts?

It is a yet harder thought, perhaps, than the reflection which I have just referred to, and which has in it something of vanity—to know how much, for want of sympathy in those around us, our noblest motives, our purest qualities, are misunderstood. We die—none have known us!—and yet all are to declaim on our charac-

* Bacon.

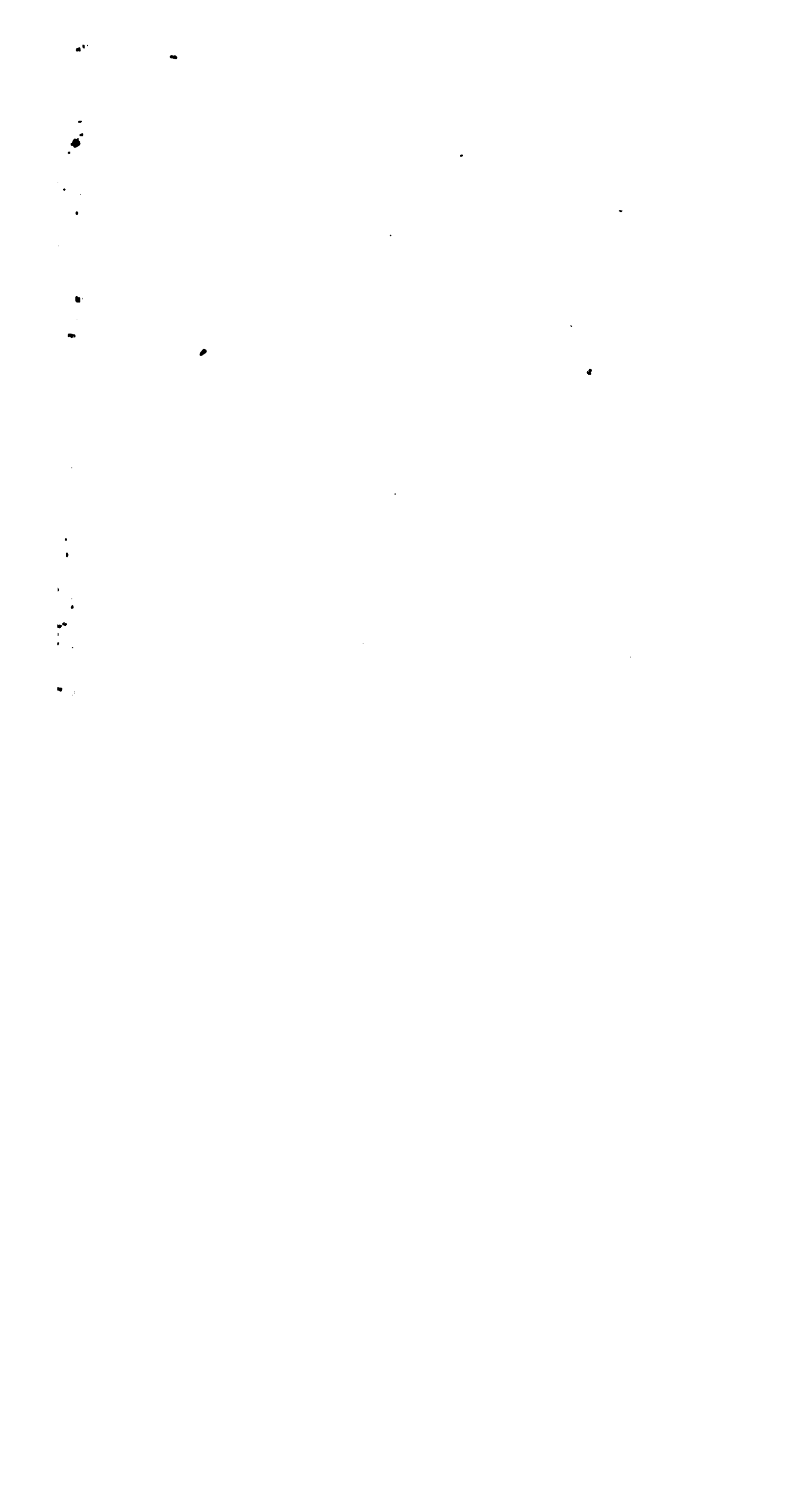
ter—measure at a glance the dark abyss of our souls—prate of us as if we were household and hackneyed to them from our cradle. One amongst the number shall write our biography—the rest shall read and conceive they know us ever afterwards. We go down to our sons' sons, darkened and disguised; so that, looking on men's colourings of our mind and life, from our repose on the bosom of God, we shall not recognise one feature of the portrait we have left to earth!



ARASMANES;

OR,

THE SEEKER.



ARASMANES;

OR, THE SEEKER.

CHAPTER I.

In the broad plains of Chaldæa, and not the least illustrious of those shepherd-sages, from whom came our first learning of the lights of heaven, the venerable Chosphor saw his age decline into the grave. Upon his death-bed he thus addressed his only son, the young Arasmanes, in whose piety he recognised, even in that gloomy hour, a consolation and a blessing; and for whose growing renown for wisdom and

for valour, the faint pulses of expiring life yet beat with paternal pride.

"Arasmanes," said he, "I am about to impart to you the only secret which, after devoting eighty years to unravel the many mysteries of knowledge, I consider worthy of transmitting to my child. Thou knowest that I have wandered over the distant regions of the world, and have experienced, with all the vicissitudes, some of the triumphs, and many of the pleasures, of life. Learn, from my experience, that earth possesses nothing which can reward the pursuit, or satisfy the desire. When you see the stars shining down upon the waters you behold an image of the visionary splendours of hope: the light sparkles on the wave; but it neither warms while it glitters, nor can it, for a single instant, arrest the progress of the stream from the dark gulf into which it hastens to merge itself and be lost. It was not till my old age that this conviction grew upon my mind; and about that time, I discovered, from one of the sacred books to which my studies were then applied,

the secret I am now about to confide to thy ear. Know, my son, that in the extremities of Asia there is a garden in which the God of the Universe placed the first parents of mankind. In that garden the sun never sets; nor does the beauty of the seasons wane. *There*, is neither Ambition, nor Avarice, nor false Hope, nor its child, Regret. *There*, is neither age nor deformity; diseases are banished from the air; eternal youth, and the serenity of an unbroken happiness, are the prerogative of all things that breathe therein. For a mystic and unknown sin our first parents were banished from this happy clime, and their children scattered over the earth. Superhuman beings are placed at its portals, and clouds and darkness veil it from the eyes of ordinary men. But, to the virtuous and to the bold, there is no banishment from the presence of God; and by them the darkness may be penetrated, the dread guardians softened, and the portals of the divine land be passed. Thither, then, my son—early persuaded that the rest of earth is paved with sorrow and with

care—thither, then, bend thy adventurous way. Fain could I have wished that, in my stronger manhood, when my limbs could have served my will, I had learned this holy secret, and repaired in search of the ancestral clime. Avail thyself of my knowledge; and, in the hope of thy happiness, I shall die contented." The pious son pressed the hand of his sire, and promised obedience to his last command.

"But, oh, my father!" said he, "how shall I know in what direction to steer my course? To this land who shall be my guide, or what my clue? Can ship, built by mortal hands, anchor at its coast; or can we say to the camel-driver, 'Thou art approaching to the goal?'"

The old man pointed to the east.

"From the east," said he, "dawns the sun—type of the progress of the mind's light; from the east comes all of science that we know. Born in its sultry regions, seek only to pierce to its extreme; and, guiding thyself by the stars of heaven ever in one course, reach at last the ADEN that shall reward thy toils."

And Chosphor died, and was buried with his fathers.

After a short interval of mourning, Arasmanes took leave of his friends; and, turning his foot-steps to the east, sought the gates of Paradise.

He travelled far, and alone, for several weeks; and the stars were his only guides. By degrees, as he progressed, he found that the existence of Aden was more and more acknowledged. Accustomed from his boyhood to the companionship of sages, it was their abodes that he sought in each town or encampment through which the wanderer passed. By them his ardour was confirmed; for they all agreed in the dim and remote tradition of some beautiful region in the farthest east, from which the existing races of the earth were banished, and which was jealously guarded from profane approach by the wings of the spirits of God. But, if he communicated to any one his daring design, he had the mortification to meet only the smile of derision, or the incredulous gaze of wonder: by

some he was thought a madman, and by others an impostor. So that, at last, he prudently refrained from revealing his intentions, and contented himself with seeking the knowledge, and listening to the conjectures of others.

CHAPTER II.

At length the traveller emerged from a mighty forest, through which, for several days, he had threaded his weary way; and beautiful beyond thought was the landscape that broke upon his view. A plain covered with the richest verdure lay before him; through the trees that, here and there, darkened over the emerald ground, were cut alleys, above which arched festoons of many-coloured flowers, whose hues sparkled amidst the glossy foliage, and whose sweets steeped the air as with a bath. A stream, clear as crystal, flowed over golden sands, and, wherever the sward was greenest, gathered itself into delicious

fountains, and sent upward its dazzling spray, as if to catch the embraces of the sun, whose beams kissed it in delight.

The wanderer paused in ecstasy; a sense of luxurious rapture, which he had never before experienced, crept into his soul. "Behold!" murmured he, "my task is already done; and Aden, the land of happiness and of youth, lies before me!"

While he thus spake, a sweet voice answered —"Yes, O happy stranger!—thy task is done: this is the land of happiness and of youth!"

He turned, and a maiden of dazzling beauty was by his side. "Enjoy the present," said she, "and so wilt thou defy the future. Ere yet the world was, Love brooded over the unformed shell, till from beneath the shadow of his wings burst forth the life of the young creation. Love, then, is the true God, and whoso serveth him he admits into the mysteries of a temple erected before the stars. Behold! thou enterest now upon the threshold of the temple; thou art in the land of happiness and youth!"

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was Aden to which he had attained. He felt his youth as if it were something palpable; every thing was new to him—even in the shape of the leaves, and the whisper of the odorous airs, he found wherewithal to marvel at and admire. Enamoured of the maiden that had first addressed him, at her slightest wish, (and she was full of all beautiful caprices,) he was ready to explore even the obscurest recess in the valley which now appeared to him unbounded. He never wearied of a single hour. He felt as if weariness were impossible; and, with every instant, he repeated to himself, "In the land of happiness and youth I am a dweller."

One day, as he was conversing with his beloved, and gazing upon her face, he was amazed to behold that, since the last time he had gazed upon it, a wrinkle had planted itself upon the ivory surface of her brow; and, even while half doubting the evidence of his eyes, new wrinkles seemed slowly to form over the forehead, and the transparent roses of her cheek to wane and fade! He concealed, as well as he could, the

mortification and wonder that he experienced at this strange phenomenon; and, no longer daring to gaze upon a face from which before he had drunk delight as from a fountain, he sought excuses to separate himself from her, and wandered, confused and bewildered with his own thoughts, into the wood. The fauns, and the dryads, and the youthful face of Bacchus, and the laughing aspect of Eros, came athwart him from time to time; yet the wonder that had clothed them with fascination was dulled within his breast. Nay, he thought the poor wine-god had a certain vulgarity in his air, and he almost yawned audibly in the face of Eros.

And now, whenever he met his favourite nymph—who was as the queen of the valley—he had the chagrin to perceive that the wrinkles deepened with every time; youth seemed rapidly to desert her; and instead of a maiden scarcely escaped from childhood, it was an old coquette that he had been so desperately in love with.

One day he could not resist saying to her, though with some embarrassment—

"Pray, dearest, is it many years since you have inhabited this valley?"

"Oh, indeed, many!" said she, smiling.

"You are not, then, very young?" rejoined Arasmanes, ungallantly.

"What!" cried the nymph, changing colour, —"Do you begin to discover age in my countenance? Has any wrinkle yet appeared upon my brow? You are silent. Oh, cruel Fate! will you not spare even this lover?" And the poor nymph burst into tears.

"My dear love," said Arasmanes, painfully, "it is true that time begins to creep upon you; but my friendship shall be eternal."

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when the nymph, rising, fixed upon him a long, sorrowful look, and then, with a loud cry, vanished from his sight. Thick darkness, as a veil, fell over the plains; the NOVELTY of life, with its attendant, POETRY, was gone from the wanderer's path for ever.

A sudden sleep crept over his senses. He awoke confused and unrefreshed, and a long

and gradual ascent, but over mountains green indeed, and watered by many streams gushing from the heights, stretched before him. Of the valley he had mistaken for Aden not a vestige remained. He was once more on the real and solid earth.

CHAPTER III.

For several days, discontented and unhappy, the young adventurer pursued his course, still seeking only the east, and still endeavouring to console himself for the sweet delusions of the past by hoping an Aden in the future.

The evening was still and clear; the twilight star broke forth over those giant plains—free from the culture and the homes of men, which yet make the character of the eastern and early world; a narrow stream, emerging from a fissure in a small rock covered with moss, sparkled forth under the light of the solemn heavens, and flowed far away, till lost amongst the gloom

of a forest of palms. By the source of this stream sat an aged man and a young female. And the old man was pouring into his daughter's ear—for Azraaph held to Ochtor that holy relationship—the first doctrines of the world's wisdom; those wild but lofty conjectures by which philosophy penetrated into the nature and attributes of God; and reverently the young maiden listened, and meekly shone down the star of eve upon the dark yet lustrous beauty of her earnest countenance.

It was at this moment that a stranger was seen descending from the hills that bordered the mighty plains; and he, too, worn and tired with long travel, came to the stream to refresh his burning thirst, and lave the dust from his brow.

He was not at first aware of the presence of the old man and the maiden; for they were half concealed beneath the shadow of the rock from which the stream flowed. But the old man, who was one of those early hermits with whom wisdom was the child of solitude, and who, weary with a warring and savage world, had

long since retired to a cavern not far from the source of that stream, and dwelt apart with Nature—the memories of a troubled Past, and the contemplation of a mysterious Future,—the old man, I say, accustomed to proffer to the few wanderers that from time to time descended the hills (seeking the cities of the east) the hospitalities of food and shelter, was the first to break the silence.

Arasmanes accepted with thankfulness the offers of the hermit, and that night he became Ochtor's guest. There were many chambers in the cavern, hollowed either by the hand of Nature, or by some early hunters on the hill; and into one of these the old man, after the Chaldæan had refreshed himself with the simple viands of the hermitage, conducted the wanderer: it was covered with dried and fragrant mosses; and the sleep of Arasmanes was long, and he dreamed many cheerful dreams.

When he rose the next morning, he found his entertainers were not within the cavern. He looked forth, and beheld them once more by

the source of the stream, on which the morning sun shone, and round which fluttered the happy wings of the desert birds. The wanderer sought his hosts in a spot on which they were accustomed, morning and eve, to address the Deity. "Thou dost not purpose to leave us soon," said the hermit; "for he who descends from yon mountains must have traversed a toilsome way, and his limbs will require rest."

Arasmanes, gazing on the beauty of Azraaph, answered, "In truth, did I not fear that I should disturb thy reverent meditations, the cool of the plains and the quiet of thy cavern, and, more than all, thy converse and kind looks, would persuade me, my father, to remain with thee many days."

"Behold how the wandering birds give life and merriment to the silent stream!" said the sage; "and so to the solitary man are the footsteps of his kind." And Arasmanes sojourned with Ochtor the old man.

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Behold, my daughter hath
eyes—she loveth thee—
tender of heart. Tarry

"Thou art right, venerable Ochtor," cried Arasmanes with enthusiasm; "give me but thy daughter, and I will ask for no other Aden than these plains."

CHAPTER V.

THE sun had six times renewed his course, and Arasmanes still dwelt in the cave of Ochtor. In the fair face of Azraaph he discovered no wrinkles—her innocent love did not pall upon him; the majestic calm of Nature breathed its own tranquillity into his soul, and in the lessons of Ochtor he took a holy delight. He found in his wisdom that which at once stilled the passions and inspired the thoughts. At times, however, and of late more frequently than ever, strong yearnings after the Aden he had so vainly pursued were yet felt. He felt that curse of monotony which is the invariable offspring of quiet.

At the end of the sixth year, as one morning

they stood without the door of the cavern, and their herds fed tranquilly around them, a band of men from the western hills came suddenly in view: they were discovered before they had time to consider whether they should conceal themselves; they had no cause, however, for fear—the strangers were desirous only of food and rest.

Foremost of this band was an aged man of majestic mien, and clothed in the richest garments of the east. Loose flowed his purple robe, and bright shone the jewels on the girdle that clasped his sword. As he advanced to accost Ochtor, upon the countenance of each of the old men grew doubt, astonishment, recognition, and joy. "My brother!" burst from the lips of both, and the old chief fell upon Ochtor's bosom and wept aloud. The brothers remained alone the whole day, and at nightfall they parted with many tears; and Zamielides, the son of the chief, (who was with the band,) knelt to Ochtor, and Ochtor blessed him.

Now, when all were gone, and Silence once more slept upon the plains, Ochtor went forth

alone, and Azraaph said unto her husband, "My father's mind seems disquieted and sad; go forth, I pray thee, my beloved, and comfort him; the dews lie thick upon the grass, and my father is very old."

By the banks of the stream stood Ochtor, and his arms were folded on his breast; the river-horses were heard snorting in the distance, and the wild zebras came to drink at the wave; and the presence of the beasts made more impressive the solitude of the old man.

"Why art thou disquieted, my father?" said Arasmanes.

"Have I not parted with my near of kin?"

"But thou didst never hope to meet them; and are not thy children left thee?"

Ochtor waved his hand with an unwonted impatience.

"Listen to me, Arasmanes. Know that Zamiel and I were brothers. Young and ardent, each of us aspired to rule our kind, and each of us imagined he had the qualities that secure command; but mark, *my* arm was the stronger

in the field, and *my* brain was the subtler in the council. We toiled and schemed, and rose into repute among our tribe, but Envy was busy with our names. Our herds were seized—we were stripped of our rank—we were degraded to the level of our slaves. Then, disgusted with my race, I left their cities, and in these vast solitudes I forgot ambition in content. But my brother was of more hopeful heart; with a patient brow he veiled the anger he endured. Lo, he hath been rewarded! His hour came—he gathered together his friends in secret—he smote our enemies in the dead of night; and at morning, behold, he was hailed chieftain of the tribe. This night he rides with his son to the king of the City of Golden Palaces, whose daughter that son is about to wed. Had I not weakly renounced my tribe—had I not fled hither, that glorious destiny would have been mine; *I* should have been the monarch of my race, and my daughter have matched with kings. Marvellest thou, now, that I am disquieted, or that my heart is sore within me?"

And Arasmanes saw that the sage had been superior to the world, only while he was sickened of the world.

And Ochtor nourished the discontent he had formed to his dying day; and, within three months from that night, Arasmanes buried him by the source of the solitary stream.

CHAPTER VI.

The death of Ochtor, and his previous confession, deeply affected Arasmanes. He woke as from a long sleep. Solitude had lost its spell; and he perceived that inactivity itself may be the parent of remorse. "If," thought he, "so wise, so profound a mind as that of Ochtor was thus sensible to the memories of ambition—if, on the verge of death, he thus regretted the solitude in which he had buried his years, and felt, upon the first tidings from the great world, that he had wasted the promise and powers of life, how much more accessible

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change; and, except at night, when she was weary of spirit, she ceased to utter her regrets for the stream and the quiet cave. They travelled eastward for several weeks, and met with no living thing by the way, save a few serpents, and a troop of wild horses. At length, one evening, they found themselves in the suburbs of a splendid city. As they approached the gates they drew back, dazzled with the lustre, for the gates were of burnished gold, which shone bright and glittering as they caught a sunny light from the lamps of naphtha that hung, frequent, from the mighty walls.

They inquired, as they passed the gates, the name of the city; and they heard, with some surprise, and more joy, that it was termed, "The City of Golden Palaces."

"Here, then," cried Azraaph, "we shall be well received; for the son of my father's brother is wedded to the daughter of the king."

"And here, then, will be many sages," thought Arasmanes, "who will, doubtless, have some knowledge of the true situation of Aden."

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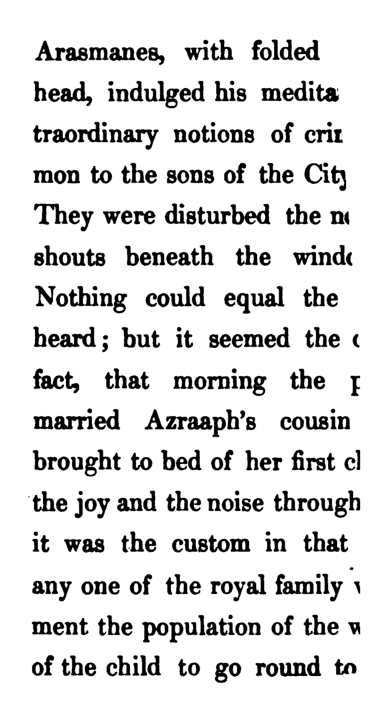
judge frowned terribly.) Thy garments are scanty and worn. I fancy thou hast neither silver nor gold."

"Thou sayest right," replied Arasmanes; "I have neither."

"Ho, ho!" quoth the judge; "he confesses his guilt; he owns that he has neither silver nor gold. Here, soldiers, seize this man and woman. Away with them to prison; and let them be brought up for sentence of death to-morrow. We will then decide whether they shall be hanged or starved. The wretches have, positively, neither silver nor gold; and, what is worse, they own it!"

"Is it possible!" cried the crowd; and a shudder of horror crept through the bystanders. "Away with them!—away with them! Long life to Judge Kaly, whose eye never sleeps, and who preserves us for ever from the poor!"

The judge walked on, shedding tears of virtuous delight at the reputation he had acquired.



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with banners above him and spears around, came the young father to the jail, in which our unfortunate couple were confined.

" Have you any extraordinary criminals in your prison ?" asked the prince, of the head jailor; for he was studying, at that time, to be affable.

" Only one man, my lord, who was committed last night; and who absolutely confessed in cold blood, and without torture, that he had neither silver nor gold. It is a thousand pities that such a miscreant should be suffered to go free !"

" You are right," said the prince; " and what impudence to confess the crime ! I should like to see so remarkable a criminal."

So saying, the prince dismounted, and followed the jailor to the cell in which Arasmanes and his wife were confined. They recognised their relation at once; for, in that early age of the world, people in trouble had a wonderfully quick memory in recollecting relatives in power. Azraaph ran to throw herself on the prince's

neck, (which the guards quickly prevented,) and the stately Arasmanes began to utter his manly thanks for the visit.

"These people are mad," cried the prince, hastily. "Release them; but let me escape first." So saying, he ran down stairs so fast that he nearly broke his neck; and then, mounting his horse, pursued his way to the other prisons, amidst the shouts of the people.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were now turned out into the streets. They were exceedingly hungry; and they went into the first baker's shop they saw, and asked the rites of hospitality.

"Certainly; but your money first," said the baker.

Arasmanes, made wise by experience, took care not to reply that he had no money; "But" said he, "I have left it behind me at my lodging. Give me the bread now, and lo, I will repay thee to-morrow."

"Very well," said the baker; "but that sword of yours has a handsome hilt: leave it with me till you return with the monies."

So Arasmanes took the bread, and left the sword.

They were now refreshed, and resolved to leave so dangerous a city as soon as they possibly could, when, just as they turned into a narrow street, they were suddenly seized by six soldiers, blindfolded, gagged, and hurried away, whither they knew not. At last they found themselves ascending a flight of stairs. A few moments more, and the bandages were removed from their mouths and eyes, and they saw themselves in a gorgeous chamber, and alone in the presence of the prince, their cousin.

He embraced them tenderly. "Forgive me," said he, "for appearing to forget you; but it was as much as my reputation was worth in this city to acknowledge relations who confessed to have neither silver nor gold. By the beard of my grandfather, how could you be so imprudent? Do you not know that you are in a country in which the people worship only one deity, the god of the precious metals? Not to have the precious metals is not to have virtue;

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Aden?"
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the sworded angel of which tradition hath spoken." "But," said he aloud, "I have no gold, and no silver, O my prince!"

"Heed not that," answered the kind Zamielides: "I have enough for all. You shall be provided for this very day."

"But will not the people recognise me as the poor stranger?"

The prince laughed for several minutes so loudly, that they feared he was going into fits.

"What manner of man art thou, Arasmanes?" said he, when he was composed enough to answer.

"Knowest thou not that the people of this city never know what a man has been when he is once rich? Appear to-morrow in purple, and they will never dream that they saw thee yesterday in rags."

THE kind Zamielides, cousins into his own cha tire themselves in splendi had ordered to be prepare them a palace and large chandise.

"Behold," said he, takii top of a mighty tower wl sea: "behold yonder shi forest of masts, from that the six vessels with the gree will teach thee the mysteries wilt soon be as wealthy as m

"And what is Trade, my manes.

"I

CHAPTER VIII.

Arasmanes was universally courted; so wise, so charming a person had never appeared in the City of Golden Palaces, and as for the beauty of Azraaph, it was declared the very masterpiece of nature. Intoxicated with the homage they received, and the splendour in which they lived, their days glided on in a round of luxurious delight.

"Right art thou, O Zamielides!" cried Arasmanes, as his ships returned with new treasure; "the City of Golden Palaces is the true Aden."

CHAPTER IX.

Arasmanes had now been three years in the city; and you might perceive that a great change had come over his person: the hues of health had



faded from his cheeks: his brow was care-worn —his step slow—his lips compressed. He no longer thought that he lived in the true Aden; and yet for Aden itself he would scarcely have quitted the City of Golden Palaces. Occupied solely with the task of making and spending money, he was consumed with the perpetual fear of losing, and the perpetual anxiety to increase his stock. He trembled at every darker cloud that swept over the heavens; he turned pale at every ruder billow that agitated the sea. He lived a life of splendid care: and the pleasures which relieved it were wearisome because of their sameness. He saw but little of his once idolized Azraaph. Her pursuits divided her from him. In so civilized a country they could not be always together. If he spoke of his ships he wearied her to death; if she spoke of the festivals she had adorned, he was equally tired of the account.

CHAPTER X.

The court was plunged in grief. Zamielides was seized with a fever. All the wise men attended him; but he turned his face to the wall and died. Arasmanes mourned for him more sincerely than any one; for, besides that Arasmanes had great cause to be grateful to him, he knew, also, that if any accident happened to his vessels, he had now no friend willing to supply the loss. This made him more anxious than ever about the safety of his wealth. A year after this event, the king of the City of Golden Palaces thought fit to go to war. The war lasted four years; and two millions of men were killed on all sides. The second year Arasmanes was at a splendid banquet given at the court. A messenger arrived, panting and breathless. A great battle at sea had been fought. Ten thousand of the king's subjects had been killed.

"But who won the battle?" cried the king.

"Your majesty."

The air was rent with shouts of joy.

"One little accident only," continued the herald, "happened the next day. Three of the scattered war-ships of the enemy fell in with the vessels of some of our merchants returning from Ophir, laden with treasure, and, in revenge, they burnt and sank them."

"Were my ships of the number?" asked Arasmanes, with faltering tongue.

"It was of thy ships that I spoke," answered the messenger.

But nobody thought of Arasmanes, or of the ten thousand subjects that were killed. The city was out of its wits with joy that his majesty had won the victory.

"Alas! I am a ruined man!" said Arasmanes, as he sat with ashes on his head.

"And we can give no more banquets," sighed his wife.

"And every body will trample upon us," said Arasmanes.

"And we must give up our palace," groaned the tender Azraaph.

"But one ship remains to me!" cried Arasmanes, starting up, "it is now in port. I will be its captain. I will sail myself with it to Ophir. I will save my fortunes, or perish in the attempt."

"And I will accompany thee, my beloved," exclaimed Azraaph, flinging herself on his neck; "*for* I cannot bear the pity of the wives whom I have outshone!"

The sea was calm, and the wind favourable when the unfortunate pair entered their last ship; and, for a whole week, the gossip at court was of the folly of Arasmanes, and the devotion of his wife.

CHAPTER XI.

They had not been many weeks at sea, before an adverse wind set in, which drove them entirely out of their destined course. They were beaten eastward, and, at length, even



the oldest and most experienced of the mariners confessed they had entered seas utterly unknown to them. Worn and wearied, when their water was just out, and their provisions exhausted, they espied land, and, at nightfall, the ship anchored on a green and pleasant shore. The inhabitants, half naked, and scarce escaped from the first savage state of nature, ran forth to meet and succour them: by mighty fires the seamen dried their wet garments, and forgot the hardships they had endured. They remained several days with the hospitable savages, repaired their vessel, and replenished its stores. But what especially attracted the notice of Arasmanes, was the sight of some precious diamonds which, in a rude crown, the chief of the savages wore on his head. He learned from signs easy of interpretation, that these diamonds abounded in a certain island in the farthest east; and that from time to time large fragments of rock in which they were imbedded were cast upon the shore. But when Arasmanes signified his intention to seek this island, the savages, by ges-

tures of horror and dismay, endeavoured to denote the dangers that attended the enterprise, and to dissuade him from attempting it. Naturally bold, and consumed with his thirst for wealth, these signs made but little impression upon the Chaldæan; and one fair morning he renewed his voyage. Steering perpetually towards the east, and with favouring winds, they came, on the tenth day, in sight of an enormous rock, which shone far down over the waters with so resplendent a glory, as to dazzle the eyes of the seamen. Diamond and ruby, emerald and carbuncle, glittered from the dark soil of the rock, and promised to the heart of the humblest mariner the assurance of illimitable wealth. Never was human joy more ecstatic than that of the crew as the ship neared the coast. The sea was in this place narrow and confined, the opposite shore was also in view—black, rugged, and herbless, with pointed rocks, round which the waves sent their white foam on high, guarding its drear approach: little recked they, however, of the opposite shore, as their eyes

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Fame and fortune, and l

a slow and fearful hiss, the serpent of the east seas reared his head from the ocean. Dark and huge as the vastest cavern in which ghoul or Afrite ever dwelt was the abyss of his jaws, and the lurid and terrible eyes outshone even the lustre of the diamond rock.

"I defy thee," cried Arasmanes, waving his sword above his head; when suddenly the ship whirled round and round; the bold Chaldæan was thrown with violence on the deck; he felt the waters whirl and blacken over him; and then all sense of life deserted him.

When he came to himself, Arasmanes was lying on the hot sands of the shore opposite to the Diamond Isle; wrecks of the vessel were strewn around him, and here and there the dead bodies of his seamen. But at his feet lay, swollen and distorted, the shape of his beautiful Azraaph, the sea-weeds twisted round her limbs, and the deformed shell-fish crawling over her long hair. And tears crept into the eyes of the Chaldæan, and all his old love for Azraaph returned, and he threw himself down beside her mangled re-

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heart. He felt as if cured
passions. A ...

for the horsemen were clad in armour of brass and steel, and the hot sun reflected the array like the march of a river of light. Arasmanes paused, and his heart swelled high within him as he heard through the wide plains the martial notes of the trumpet and the gong, and recognised the glory and pomp of war.

The cavalcade swept on; and the chief who rode at the head of the band paused as he surveyed with admiration the noble limbs, and proud stature, and dauntless eye of the Chaldæan. The chief summoned his interpreters; and in that age the languages of the east were but slightly dissimilar; so that the chief of the warriors conversed easily with the adventurer. "Know," said he, "that we are bent upon the most glorious enterprise ever conceived by the sons of men. In the farthest east there is a land of which thy fathers may have informed thee—a land of perpetual happiness and youth, and its name is Aden." Arasmanes started; he could scarce believe his ears. The warrior continued—"We are of that tribe which lies to

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The neighing of the ste

grasped at the offer of the warrior; and the armourer clad him in steel, and the ostrich-plume waved over his brow, and he rode at the right hand of the warrior-king.

CHAPTER XII.

The armament was not without a guide; for, living so near unto the rising of the sun, what with others was tradition with them was knowledge; and many amongst them had travelled to the site of Aden, and looked upon the black cloud that veiled it, and trembled at the sound of the rushing but invisible wings that hovered over.

Arasmanes confided to the warrior his whole history; they swore eternal friendship; and the army looked upon the Chaldæan as a man whom God had sent to their assistance. For, what was most strange, not one of the army ever seemed to imagine there was aught unholy or profane in the daring enterprise in which they had enlisted; accustomed to consider

bloodshed a virtue, what was the crime of winning the gardens of Paradise by force?

Through wastes and deserts they held their way; and, though their numbers thinned daily by fatigue, and the lack of food, and the fiery breath of the burning winds, they seemed not to relax in their ardour, nor to repine at the calamities they endured.

CHAPTER XIII.

Darkness gloomed like a wall! From heaven to earth stretched the palpable and solid Night that was the barrier to the land of Aden. No object gleamed through the impenetrable blackness; from those summitless walls hung no banner; no human champion frowned before the drear approach: all would have been silence, save that, at times, they heard the solemn rush as of some mighty sea; and they knew that it was the rush of the guardian wings.

The army halted before the darkness, mute

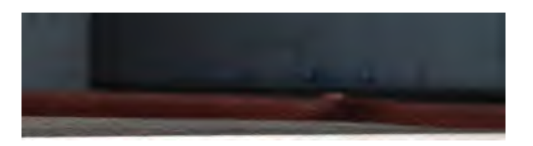
and awed; their eyes recoiled from the gloom, and rested upon the towering crest and snowy plumage of their chief. And he bade them light the torches of naphtha that they had brought with them, and unsheath their swords; and, at the given sound, horseman and horse dashed in through the walls of night. For one instant, the torches gleamed and sparkled amidst the darkness, and were then suddenly extinguished; but through the gloom came one gigantic hand wielding a sword of flame; and, wherever it turned, man smote the nearest man —father perished by his son—and brother fell gasping by the death-stroke of his brother; shrieks and cries, and the trample of affrighted steeds, rang through the riven shade—riven only by that mighty sword as it waved from rank to rank, and the gloom receded from its rays.

CHAPTER XIV.

At eve the work was done; a small remnant of the warriors, alone escaped from the general slaughter, lay exhausted upon the ground before the veil of Aden. Arasmanes was the last who lingered in the warring gloom; for, as he lay struggling beneath the press of dying and dead, the darkness had seemed to roll away, and, far into its depths, he caught one glimpse of the wonderful loveliness of Aden. There, over valleys covered with the greenest verdure, and watered by rivers without a wave, basked a purpling and loving sunlight, that was peaceful and cloudless, for it was the smile of God. And there, were groups of happy beings scattered around, in whose faces was the serenity of unutterable joy; even at the mere aspect of their happiness—happiness itself was reflected upon the soul of the Chaldæan, despite the dread, the horror, and the desolation of the hour. He stretched out his arms imploringly, and the vision faded for ever from his sight.

CHAPTER XV.

The king and all the principal chiefs of the army were no more; and, with one consent, Arasmanes was proclaimed their leader. Sorrowful and dejected, he conducted the humbled remnant of the troop back through the deserts to the land they had so rashly left. Thrice on their return they were attacked by hostile tribes, but by the valour and prudence of Arasmanes they escaped the peril. They arrived at their native city to find that the brother of their chief had seized the reins of government. The army, who hated him, declared for the stranger-chief who had led them home. And Arasmanes, hurried away by the prospect of power, consented to their will. A battle ensued; the usurper was slain; and Arasmanes, a new usurper, ascended the throne in his stead.



CHAPTER XVI.

The Chaldæan was no longer young; the hardships he had undergone in the desert had combined with the anxieties that had preyed upon him during his residence in the City of Golden Palaces to plant upon his brow, and in his heart, the furrows of untimely age. He was in the possession of all the sources of enjoyment at that period when we can no longer enjoy. Howbeit, he endeavoured to amuse himself by his divan of justice, from which every body went away dissatisfied, and his banquets, at which the courtiers complained of his want of magnificence, and the people of his profligate expense. Grown wise by experience, he maintained his crown by flattering his army; and, surrounded by luxury, felt himself supported by power.

There came to the court of Arasmanes a strange traveller; he was a little old man, of plain appearance, but great wisdom; in fact, he

was one of the most noted sages of the east. His conversation, though melancholy, had the greatest attraction for Arasmanes, who loved to complain to him of the cares of royalty, and the tediousness of his life.

"Ah, how much happier are those in a humbler station!" said the king; "How much happier was I in the desert-cave, tending my herds, and listening to the sweet voice of Azraaph!—Would that I could recall those days!"

"I can enable you to do so, great king!" said the sage; "behold this mirror; gaze on it whenever you desire to recall the past; and whatever portion of the past you wish to summon to your eyes shall appear before you."

CHAPTER XVII.

The sage did not deceive Arasmanes. The mirror reflected all the scenes through which the Chaldæan had passed: now he was at the feet of Chosphor, a happy boy—now with elastic

hopes entering into the enchanted valley of the Nymph ere yet he learned how her youth could fade—now he was at the source of the little stream, and gazing on the face of Azraaph by the light of the earliest star; whichever of these scenes he wished to live over again reflected itself vividly in the magic mirror. Surrounded by pomp and luxury in the present, his only solace was in the past.

"You see that I was right," said he to the sage: "I was much happier in those days; else why so anxious to renew them?"

"Because, O great king," said the sage, with a bitter smile, "you see them without recalling the feelings you then experienced as well as the scenes; you gaze on the past with the feelings you *now* possess, and all that then made the prospect clouded is softened away by time. Judge for yourself if I speak true." So saying, the sage breathed over the mirror, and bade Arasmanes look into it once more. He did so. He beheld the same scenes, but the illusion was gone from them. He was a boy once more;

but restlessness, and anxiety, and a thousand petty cares at his heart: he was again in the cave with Azraaph, but secretly pining at the wearisome monotony of his life: in all those scenes he now imagined the happiest he perceived that he had not enjoyed the *present;* he had been looking forward to the future, and the dream of the unattainable Aden was at his heart. "Alas!" said he, dashing the mirror into pieces, "I was deceived; and thou hast destroyed for me, O sage, even the pleasure of the past!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Arasmanes never forgot the brief glimpse of Aden that he had obtained in his impious warfare; and, now that the charm was gone from Memory, the wish yet to reach the unconquered land returned more powerfully than ever to his mind. He consulted the sage as to its possibility.

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hence, will visit thee, s

“ Cannot the visitor

said Arasmanes.

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CHAPTER XIX.

The very next day, as the king sat in his divan, a great noise was heard without the doors; and, presently, a hag, dressed in white garments of a foreign fashion, and of a hideous and revolting countenance, broke away from the crowd, and made up to the king: "They would not let me come to thee, because I am homely and aged," said she in a shrill and discordant voice; "but I have been in a king's court before now ——"

"What wantest thou, woman?" said Arasmanes; and he felt, as he spake, a chill creep to his heart.

"I am that visitor of which the wise man spake," said she; "and I would talk to thee alone."

Arasmanes felt impelled as by some mighty power which he could not withstand; he rose from his throne, the assembly broke up in surprise, and the hag was admitted alone to the royal presence.

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"Ay," said the king
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The sleep of Arasmane

apparition of the hag had given him a distaste of Aden itself, certain it was that he felt the desire of his whole life had vanished entirely from his breast; and his only wish now was to enjoy, as long and as heartily as he was able, the pleasures that were within his reach.

"What a fool have I been," said he aloud, "to waste so many years in wishing to leave the earth! Is it only in my old age that I begin to find how much that is agreeable earth can possess?"

"Come, come, come!" cried a shrill voice; and Arasmanes, startled, turned round to behold the terrible face of the hag.

"Come!" said she, stamping her foot; "I am ready to conduct thee to Aden."

"Wretch!" said the king, with quivering lips, "how didst thou baffle my guards? But I will strangle every one of them."

"Thou hast had enough of strangling," answered the crone, with a malignant glare. "Hast thou not strangled thy dearest friend?"

"What! tauntest thou me?" cried the king;

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the king, she clasped l
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CHAPTER XX.

THE wound which the talons of this horrible visitor had made in the breast of the king refused to heal: it gave him excruciating anguish. The physicians tended him in vain; in vain, too, did the wise men preach patience and hope to him. What incensed him even more than the pain was the insult he had suffered—that such a loathsome and obscene wretch should dare to maim the person of a king!—the thought was not to be borne. But, what was most strange, the more pain the king suffered, the more did he endeavour to court pleasure: life never seemed so charming to him as at the moment when it became an agony. His favourite courtiers, who had been accustomed to flatter his former weakness, and to converse with him about the happiness of Aden, and the possibility of entering it, found that even to broach the subject threw their royal master into a paroxysm of rage. He foamed at the mouth at the name of

universe.

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"Know, O king,"
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CHAPTER XXII.

It was a dark, deep, and almost waveless stream; and the courtiers, and the women, and the guards, and the wise men, gathered round the banks; and the king, leaning on the physician, ascended his gilded bark; and the physician alone entered the vessel with him. "For," said he, "the god of the stream loves it not to be profaned by the vulgar crowd; it is for kings only that it possesses its healing virtue."

So the king reclined in the middle of the vessel, and the physician took the censer of precious odours; and the bark drifted down the stream, as the crowd wept and prayed upon the shore.

"Either my eyes deceive me," said the king, faintly, "or the stream seems to expand supernaturally, as into a great sea, and the shores on either side fade into distance."

"It is so," answered the physician.—"And

" Ay," answered th

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" Dog!" cried the l
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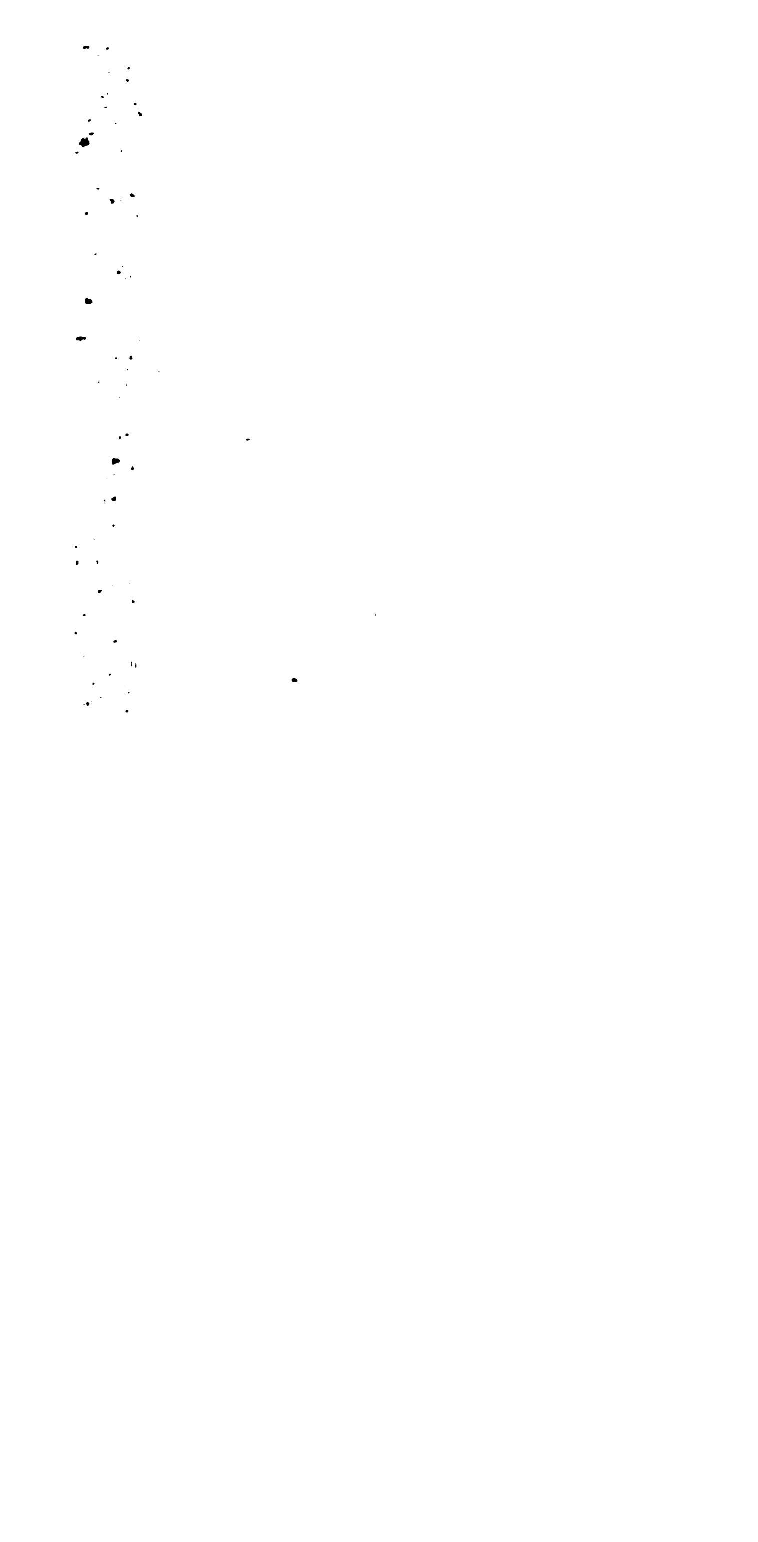
As he spoke, the fig
shrunk in size; his ro
the king beheld in his
of the accursed hag.

On drifted the vessel
banks now beheld the l
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water, while the gorgeou
streamers and gilded side
the black arch of rocks:



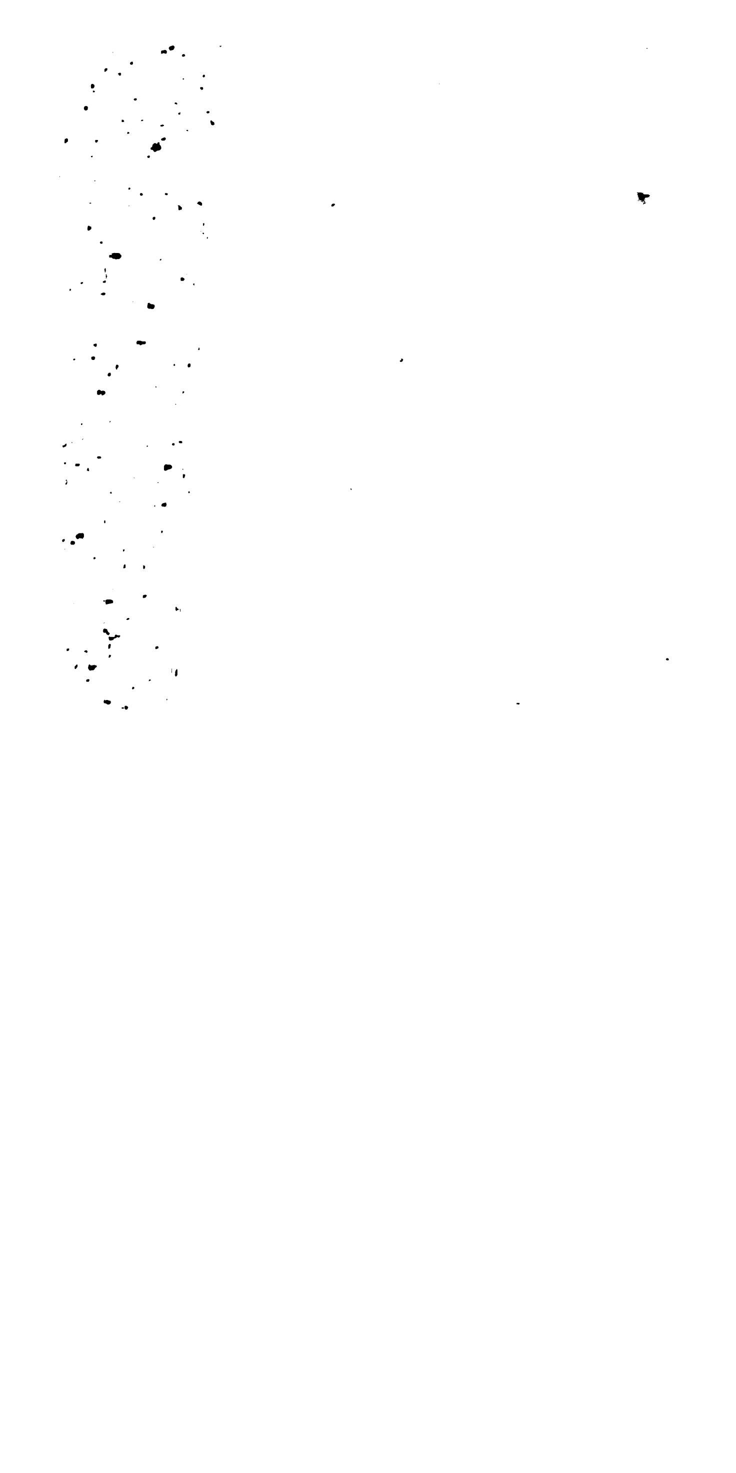
uttered the one word—"NEVER!" And from that hour the king was seen no more.

And this is the true history of Arasmanes, the Chaldæan.



ON ILL HEALTH.

AND ITS CONSOLATIONS.



ON ILL HEALTH,

AND ITS CONSOLATIONS.

We do not enough consider our physical state as the cause of much of our moral—we do not reflect enough upon our outward selves:—What changes have been produced in our minds by some external cause—an accident—an illness! For instance, a general state of physical debility—ILL HEALTH in the ordinary phrase,—is perhaps among the most interesting subjects whereon to moralize. It is not—like most topics that are dedicated to philosophy—refining and

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Life itself is but a long dying, and with every struggle against disease "we taste the grave and the solemnities of our own funerals. Every day's necessity calls for a reparation of that portion which Death fed on all night when we lay on his lap, and slept in his outer chambers."*

As the beautiful mind of Tully taught itself to regard the evils of Old Age, by fairly facing its approach, and weighing its sufferings against its consolations, so, with respect to habitual infirmities, we may the better bear them by recollecting that they are not without their solace. Every one of us must have observed that during a lengthened illness the mind acquires the habit of making to itself a thousand sources of interest—"a thousand images of one that was"—out of that quiet monotony which seems so unvaried to ordinary eyes. We grow usually far more susceptible to commonplace impressions: —As one whose eyes are touched by a fairy spell, a new world opens to us out of the surface

* Jeremy Taylor on Holy Dying.

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soil; its affections are not confined to one spot, —its dispositions fasten themselves everywhere, —they live, they thrive, they produce, in whatever region Chance may cast them, however remote from their accustomed realm. God made the human heart weak, but elastic;—it hath a strange power of turning poison into nutriment. Banish us the air of Heaven—cripple the step—bind us to the sick couch—cut us off from the cheerful face of men—make us keep house with Danger and with Darkness—we can yet play with our own fancies, and after the first bitterness of the physical thraldom, feel that despite of it we are free!

It has been my lot to endure frequent visitations of ill-health, although my muscular frame is strong, and I am capable of bearing great privation and almost any exertion of mere bodily fatigue. The reason is that I reside principally in London, and it is only of late that I have been able to inure myself to the close air and the want of exercise that belong to the life of cities. However languishing in the confine-

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and yet speak of health as our *greatest* blessing, and the workman's charge of filling up the crannies of this fast mouldering clay as the most necessary of human objects. Assuredly health is a *great* blessing, and its care is not to be despised; but there are duties far more sacred,—obligations before which the body is as nought. For it is not necessary to live, but it *is* necessary to live nobly! And of this truth we are not without the support of high examples. Who can read the great poet "who sung of heaven," and forget that his acts walked level with the lofty eminence of his genius—that he paid "no homage to the sun," that even the blessing of light itself was a *luxury*, willingly to be abandoned—but the defence of the great rights of earth, the fulfilment of the solemn trust of nations, the vindication of ages yet to come, was a *necessity*, and not to be avoided—and wherefore? because it was a duty! Are there not duties too to *us*—though upon a narrower scale—which require no less generous a devotion? Are there not objects which are

more important than the ease and welfare of the body? Is our first great charge that of being a nurse to ourselves? No: every one of us who writes, toils, or actively serves the state, forms to himself, if he knoweth anything of public virtue, interests which are not to be renounced for the purchase of a calmer pulse, and a few years added to the feeble extreme of life. Many of us have neither fortune, nor power, nor extrinsic offerings to sacrifice to mankind; but all of us—the proud, the humble, the rich, the poor—have one possession at our command;—we may sacrifice ourselves! It is from these reasons that, at the time I refer to, I put aside the hope of health;—a good earnestly indeed to be coveted, but which, if obtained only by a life remote from man, inactive, useless, self-revolving, may be too dearly bought: and gazing on the evil which I imagined (though erroneously) I could not cure, I endeavoured to reconcile myself to its necessity.

And first, it seems to me that when the nerves are somewhat weakened the senses of

sympathy are more keen—we are less negligent of our kind:—that impetuous and reckless buoyancy of spirit which mostly accompanies a hardy and iron frame, is not made to enter into the infirmities of others. How can it sympathize with what it has never known? We seldom find men of great animal health and power possessed of much delicacy of mind; their humanity and kindness proceed from an overflow of spirits—their more genial virtues are often but skin deep, and the result of good humour. The susceptible frame of women causes each more kindly and generous feeling to vibrate more powerfully on their hearts, and thus also that which in our harsher sex sharpens the nerve, often softens the affection. And this is really the cause of that increased tendency to pity, to charity, to friendship, which comes on with the decline of life, and which Bolingbroke has so touchingly alluded to. There is an excitement in the consciousness of the glorious possession of unshaken health and matured strength which hurries us on the road of that

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about us, teaches us th
this is therefore among

external pursuits, more devoted to intellectual objects, new sources of delight are thus bestowed upon us. Books become more eloquent of language, and their aspect grows welcome as the face of some dear consoler. Perhaps no epicure of the world's coarse allurement knows that degree of deep and serene enjoyment with which, shut up in our tranquil chambers, we surround ourselves with the WISDOM, the POETRY, the ROMANCE of past ages, and are made free, by the Sybil of the world's knowledge, to the Elysium of departed souls. The pain, or the fever, that from time to time reminds us of our clay, brings not perhaps more frequent and embarrassing interruptions, than the restlessness and eager passion which belong to the flush of health. Contented to repose—the repose becomes more prodigal of dreams.

And there is another circumstance usually attendant on ill-health. We live less for the world—we do not extend the circle of friendship into the wide and distracting orbit of common acquaintance—we are thus less subject to ungenial

interruptions — to vulgar humiliations — to the wear and tear of mind—the harassment and the vanity,—that torture those who seek after the "gallery of painted pictures," and "the talk where no love is." The gawd and the ostentation shrink into their true colours before the eye which has been taught to look within. And the pulses that have been calmed by pain, keep, without much effort, to the even tenor of philosophy. Thus ill-health may save us from many disquietudes and errors—from frequent mortification—and "*the walking after the vain shadow.*" Plato retired to his cave to be wise; sickness is often the moral cave, with its quiet, its darkness, and its solitude, to the soul.

I may add also, that he who has been taught the precariousness of life, acquires a knowledge of its value. He teaches himself to regard Death with a quiet eye, and habit* gifts him with a fortitude mightier than the stoicism of the Porch. As the lamb is shorn so the wind

* Exilia, tormenta, bella, morbos, naufragia, meditare, ut nullo sis malo, Tyro.—*Senec. Epist.*

is tempered. Nor is the calm without moments of mere animal ecstasy unknown to the rude health, which, having never waned from its vigour, is unconscious of the treasure it inherits. What rapture in the first steps to recovery—in the buoyant intervals of release! When the wise simplicity of Hesiod would express the overpowering joy of a bridegroom, in the flush of conquest hastening to the first embraces of his bride, he can compare him only to one escaped from some painful disease, or from the chains of a dungeon.* The release of pain is the excess of transport. With what gratitude we feel the first return of health—the first budding forth of the new spring that has dawned within us! Or, if our disease admit not that blessed regeneration, still it has its intervals and reprieves: moments, when the Mind springs up as the lark to heaven, singing and rejoicing as it bathes its plumage in the intoxicating air. So that our state may be of habitual tranquillity, and yet not dumb to raptures which have no

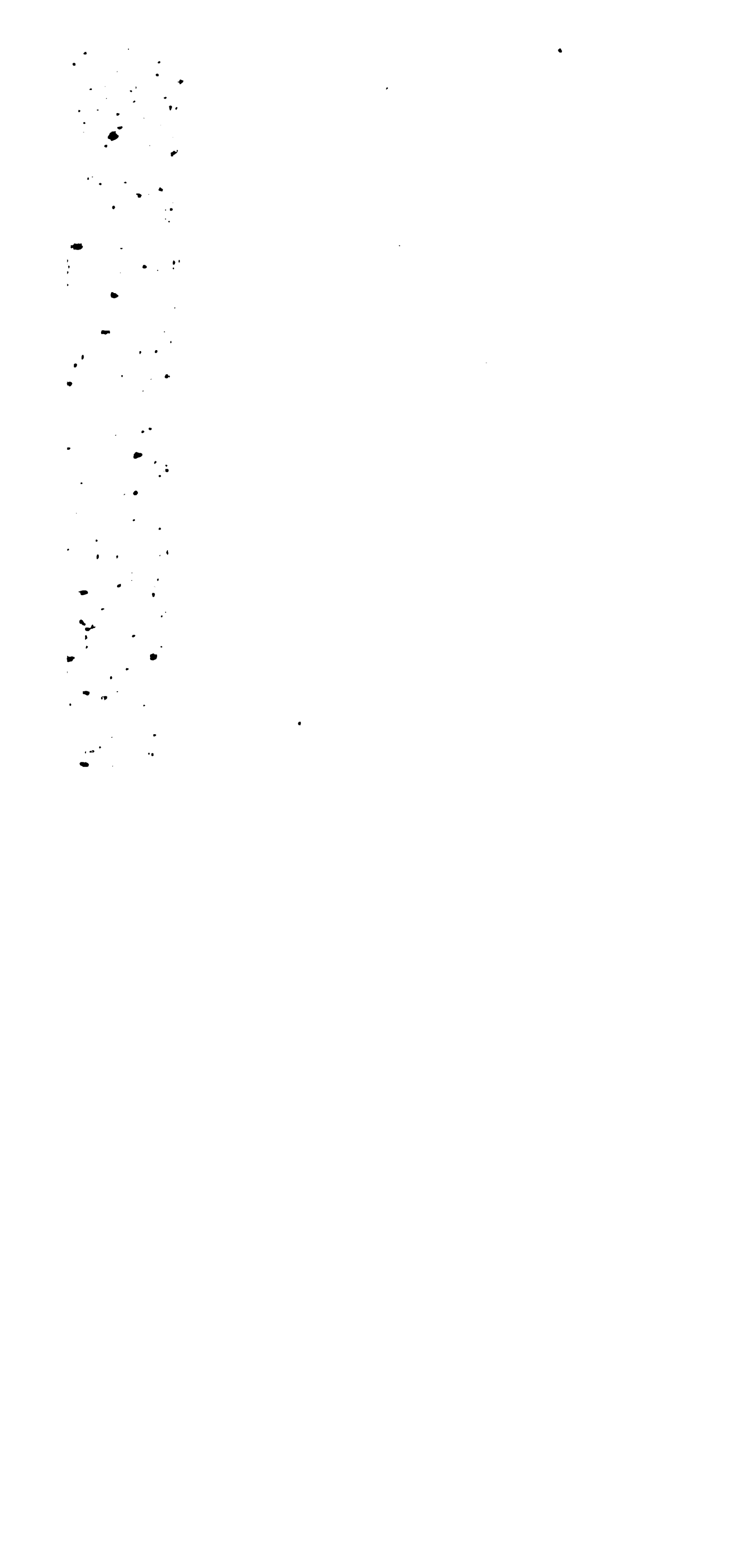
* *Hes. Scut. Herc.* line 42.

that the mind, left free to con
rally prefers the high and the
sensual and the low. As As
rise among the Chaldæan shepl
stant leisure upon their vast
enabled them to elevate their
vided to the heavenly bodies,—
to us for contemplation in our h
and our necessary disengagemen
of earth, tend to direct our t
Stars, and impregnate us half un
the Science of Heaven.

Thus while, as I have said, o
come more gentle, our souls al
noble, and our desires more p
to think, with one of the most

monitor within us is constant, but with a sweet and a cheering voice.

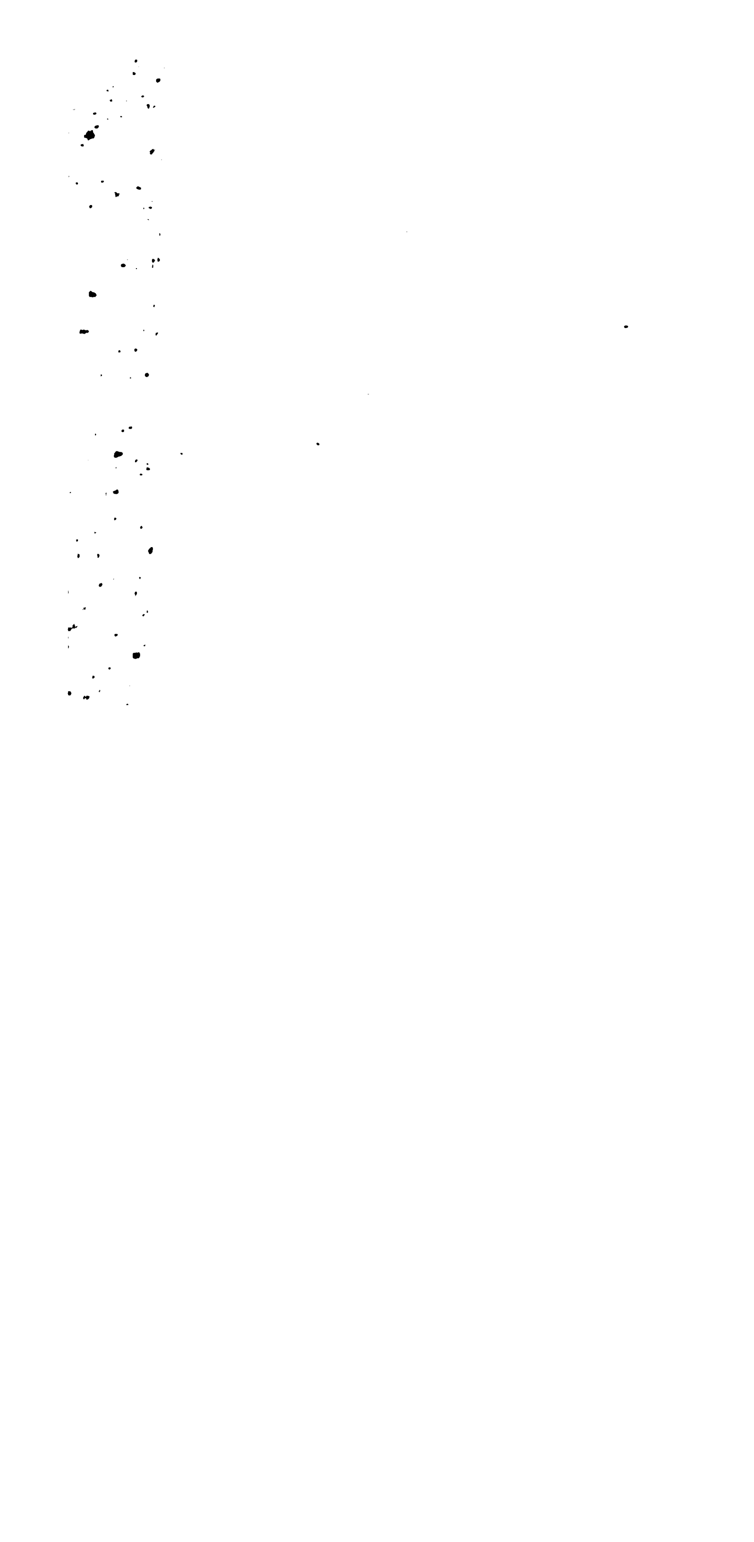
Such are the thoughts with which in the hour of sickness I taught myself to regard what with the vulgar is the greatest of human calamities! It may be some consolation to those who have suffered more bitterly than I have done, to feel that, by calling in the powers of the mind, there may be good ends and cheerful hopes wrought out from the wasting of the body; and that it is only the darkness—unconsidered and unexplored—which shapes the spectre, and appals us with the fear.





THE LAW OF ARREST.

A TALE FROM FACTS.





E LAW OF ARREST.

A TALE FROM FACTS.

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immediate interest which the proceedings Legislature have attached to the existent of Arrest, and its probable reform, induce relate the following story.

ce upon a time there lived at Hamburgh a n merchant of the name of Meyer—he was d little man; charitable to the poor, hosle to his friends, and so rich that he was mely respected, in spite of his good nature. ng that part of his property which was

owed to him by the C
sel. This debt had be
the worthy Meyer beg
vestment of his capital.
to take a trip to Por
Captain Jones was the
liberty which in my o
country never be permi
applying for his money.

Our worthy mercha
found himself at Portsm
to that town, but not
with the English langua
calling on Captain Jone

"And vat?" said he t
to conduct him to the (

The merchant bowed, and knocked at the door of a red-brick house—door green—brass knocker. Captain Gregory Jones was a tall man; he wore a blue jacket without skirts; he had high cheek bones, small eyes, and his whole appearance was eloquent of what is generally termed the bluff honesty of the seaman.

Captain Gregory Jones seemed somewhat disconcerted at seeing his friend—he begged for a little further time. The merchant looked grave—three years had already elapsed. The Captain demurred—the merchant pressed;—the Captain blustered—and the merchant, growing angry, began to threaten. All of a sudden Captain Jones's manner changed—he seemed to recollect himself, begged pardon, said he could easily procure the money, desired the merchant to go back to his inn, and promised to call on him in the course of the day. Mynheer Meyer went home, and ordered an excellent dinner. Time passed — his friend came not. Meyer grew impatient. He had just put on his hat and was walking out, when the waiter threw

heer Meyer. The gent
taller one whipped out
receipt. "Ah, ver vell,

"Signing, Sir, is use
enough to accompany us.
debt, Sir; my house is ex
gentlemen of the first fa
moderate, too, only a gui
own wine."

"I do — no — underst
merchant, smiling amiably
here—thank you—"

"Come, come," said
speaking for the first time
seer, you are our prisone
for the sum of 10,000l.

heer Meyer for 10,000*l.*; for, as every one knows, any man may arrest us who has conscience enough to swear that we owe him money. Where was Mynheer Meyer in a strange town to get bail? Mynheer Meyer went to prison.

"Dis be a strange vay of paying a man his monish!" said Mynheer Meyer.

In order to wile away time, our merchant, who was wonderfully social, scraped acquaintance with some of his fellow-prisoners. "Vat be you in prishon for?" said he to a stout respectable-looking man who seemed in a violent passion—"for vat crime?"

"I, Sir, crime!" quoth the prisoner; "Sir, I was going to Liverpool to vote at the election, when a friend of the opposite candidate's had me suddenly arrested for 2,000*l.* Before I get bail the election will be over!"

"Vat's that you tell me? arrest you to prevent you giving an honesht vote? is that justice?"

"Justice, no!" cried our friend, "it's the Law of Arrest."

kerchief to eyes that w

" An attorney offere
count a bill, if he could
indorse it—*I*, Sir, indor
due, the next day the
whose names were on th
of us, the law allows him
for each; there are sixte
lawyer—but I, Sir—alas
before *I* shall be released
of men called discounti
upon the profits of entra
poor folk."

" Mine Gott! but is d

" Alas! No, Sir, it is t

" But," said the merch

I, who, because von carrion of a shailor, who owesh me five hundred pounts, takes an oath that *I* owe him ten thousand—here am I, on that schoundrel's single oath, clapped up in a prishon. Is this a man's being innoshent till he is proved guilty, Sare?"

"Sir," said the lawyer primly, "you are thinking of criminal cases; but if a man be unfortunate enough to get into debt, that is quite a different thing:—we are harder to poverty than we are to crime!"

"But, mine Gott! is dat justice?"

"Justice! pooh! it 's the Law of Arrest," said the lawyer, turning on his heel.

Our merchant was liberated; no one appeared to prove the debt. He flew to a magistrate; he told his case; he implored justice against Captain Jones.

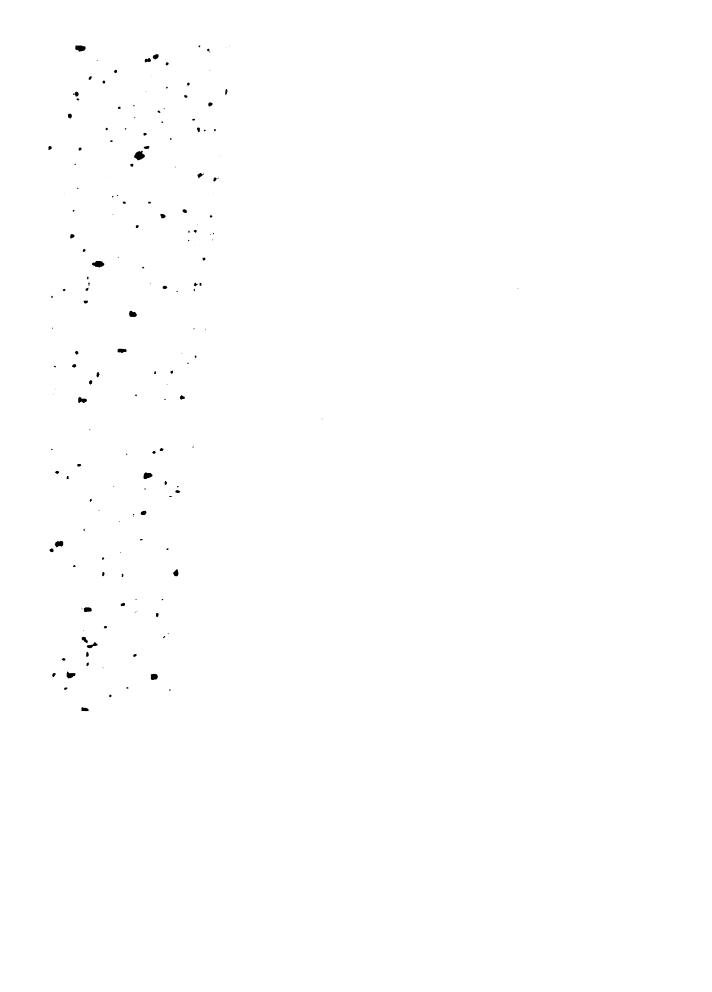
"Captain Jones!" said the magistrate, taking snuff; "Captain Gregory Jones, you mean?"

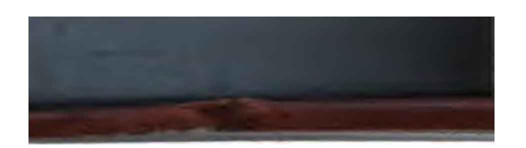
"Ay, mine goot Sare—yesh!"

"He set sail for Calcutta yesterday. He commands the Royal Sally. He must evidently

... till you coul
He's a clever fellow is
"De teufel! but, Sa
for de poor merchant?"
"Remedy! oh, yes—
"But vat use is dat?
ten thousand miles off—
"That's certainly agai
"And cannot I get my
"Not as I see."
"And *I* have been arre
"You have."
"Sare, I have only vo
justice?"
"That I can't say, Mynh
certainly the Law of Arrest
gistrate; and he bowed ...

ON SATIETY.





ON SATIETY.

Moralists are wrong when they preach indiscriminately against Satiety and denounce the sated. There *is* a species of satiety which is productive of wisdom. When Pleasure palls, Philosophy begins. I doubt whether men ever thoroughly attain to knowledge of the world, until they have gone through its attractions and allurements. Experience is not acquired by the spectator of life, but by its actor. It was not by contemplating the fortunes of others, but by the remembrance of his own, that the wisest of Mortals felt that "All was vanity." A true and practical philo-

by the garden as well as by t
healing spirit is distilled fron
which withered in our hand.

A certain sentiment of satiet
human pleasures, of the *labor i*
nothingness of trite and vulga
often the best preparation to t
vated view of the ends of life,
phy. As many have blest the l
which they had leisure to conte
existence, and to form an impr
future voyage—so there is a sic
when exhaustion itself is salı
the languor and the tedium we
of the moral regeneration.]
most indulgent in Morals, muc

gospel were amongst the unfortunate and the erring—so the men who have known most the fallacies of our human nature, are perhaps those the most inclined to foster the aspirations of the spiritual. To the one Faust who found a comrade in the Fiend, there are a thousand who are visited by the Angel.

The more civilized, the more refined, becomes the period in which we are cast, the more are we subject to satiety—

> "That weariness of all
> We meet, or feel, or hear, or see."

The even road of existence, the routine of nothings, the smooth and silken indolence, which is destined to those amongst us who, wealthy and well-born, have no occupation in life but the effort to live at ease, produce on the subject the same royalty of discontent that was once the attribute of a king. In a free and a prosperous country, all who are rich and idle are as kings. We have the same splendid monotony and unvarying spectacle of repeated

seeking to amuse those who
or like Louis XIV., in seekin
those who cannot amuse us.
fore, the common and catholi
portion of a highly civilized
inequalities of life are fitting
those who are excluded from
one extreme, there are those
of pleasure in the other.
dull and cheerless over the b
tain, but the air at the sum
withers.

Yet the poor have their sa
the wealthy—the satiety of
viction of its hopelessness. '
self," wrote a mechanic once

to render himself above the necessity of drudgery; to feel his soul out of the clutches of want, and enabled to indulge at ease in the luxury of becoming better and wiser—picture to yourself such a man, with such an ambition, finding every effort in vain, seeing that the utmost he can do is to provide for the day, and so from day to day to live battling against the morrow. With what heart can he give himself up at night to unproductive tasks. Scarce is he lost for a moment, amidst the wonders of knowledge for the first time presented to him, ere the voice of his children disturbs and brings him back to the world,—the debt unpaid—the bill discredited—the demands upon the Saturday's wages. O, Sir, in such moments, none can feel how great is our disgust at life, how jaded and how weary we feel;—we recoil alike from amusement and knowledge—we sicken at the doom to which we are compelled—we are as weary of the sun as the idlest rich man in the land—we share his prerogative of satiety, and long for the rest in the green bed where

our forefathers sleep, released for ever from the tooth of unrelenting cares."

The writer of this was a poet—let me hope that there are not many of his order condemned with him to a spirit out of harmony with its lot. Yet as knowledge widèns its circle, the number will increase, and if our social system is to remain always the same, I doubt whether the desire of knowledge, which is the desire of leisure, will be a blessing to those who are everlastingly condemned to toil.

But the satiety of the rich has its cure in what is the very curse of the poor. Their satiety is from indolence, and its cure is action. Satiety with them is chiefly the offspring of a restless imagination and a stagnant intellect. Their minds are employed on trifles, in which their feelings cease to take an interest. It is not the frivolous who feel satiety, it is a better order of spirits fated to have no other occupation than frivolities. The French memoir writers, who evince so much talent wasted away in a life of trifles, present the most melancholy pictures we

possess of satiety and of the more gloomy wisdom of apathy in which it sometimes ends. The flowers of the heart run to seed. Madame D'Epinay has expressed this briefly and beautifully—"Le cœur se blase, les ressorts se brisent, et l'on finit, je crois, par n'être plus sensible à rien."

Oh, that fearful prostration of the mind—that torpor of the affections, that utter hopeless indifference to all things—

> "Full little can he tell who hath not tried
> What hell it is!"

To rise and see through the long day no object that can interest, no pleasure that can amuse, with a heart perpetually craving excitement to pass mechanically through the round of unexcitable occupations—to make an enemy of Time—to count the moments of his march—to be his captive in the prison-house—to foresee no delivery but death—to be a machine and not a man, having no self-will and no emotion—wound up from day to day—things in a dream,



in which we act involuntarily — feeling the best part of us locked up and lifeless, and that which is active, a puppet to a power that fools us with its objectless fancies—passive but not at rest;—the deep and crushing melancholy of such a state, let no happier being venture to despise.

It is usually after some sudden pause in the passions that we are thus afflicted. The winds drop, and the leaf they whirled aloft rots upon the ground. It is the dread close of disappointed love, or of baffled ambition. Who ever painted love when it discovers the worthlessness of its object and retreats gloomily into itself, that has not painted, even to the hackneying of the picture, the weariness that succeeds—the stale and unprofitable uses to which all the world seems abruptly and barrenly resolved? So with ambition—the retirement of a statesman before his time, is perhaps the least enviable repose that his enemies could inflict on him. "Damien's bed of steel" is a luxury to the bed of withered laurels; the gloomy exile of Swift,

fretting his heart out, "a rat in a cage;" the spectre of Olivares—the petulance of Napoleon wrestling with his gaoler upon a fashion in tea-cups—what mournful parodies of the dignity of human honours! Between the past glory and the posthumous renown—how awful an interlude! The unwilling rest to a long continued excitement, is a solitude from which the fiends might recoil!

But happy those on whom the curse of satiety falls early, and before the heart has exhausted its resources; when we can yet contend against the lethargy, ere it becomes a habit, and allow satiety to extend only to the trifles of life, and not to its great objects; when we are wearied only of the lighter pleasures, and can turn to the more grave pursuits;—and the discontent of the Imagination is the spur to the Intellect. Satiety is the heritage of the Heart, not of the Reason: and the Reason properly invoked possesses in itself the genii to dissolve the charm, and awake the sleeper. For he alone, who thoroughly convinces himself that he has duties

to perform—that his centre of being is in the world and not in himself—can conquer the egotisms of weariness. The objects confined to self becoming worn out and wearisome, he may find new and inexhaustible objects in the relations that he holds to others. Duty has pleasures which know no satiety. The weariness then known and thus removed, begets the philosophy I referred to in the commencement of these remarks. For wisdom is the true phœnix, and never rises but from the ashes of a former existence of the mind. Then perhaps, too, as we learn a proper estimate of the pleasures of this life, we learn also from those yearnings of our more subtile and tender soul, never satisfied below, a fresh evidence of our ultimate destinies. A consolation which Preacher and Poet have often deduced from the weariness of our disappointments—contending that our perpetual desire for something unattainable here, betokens and prophesies a possession in the objects of a hereafter—so that life itself is but one expectation of eternity. As birds, born in a



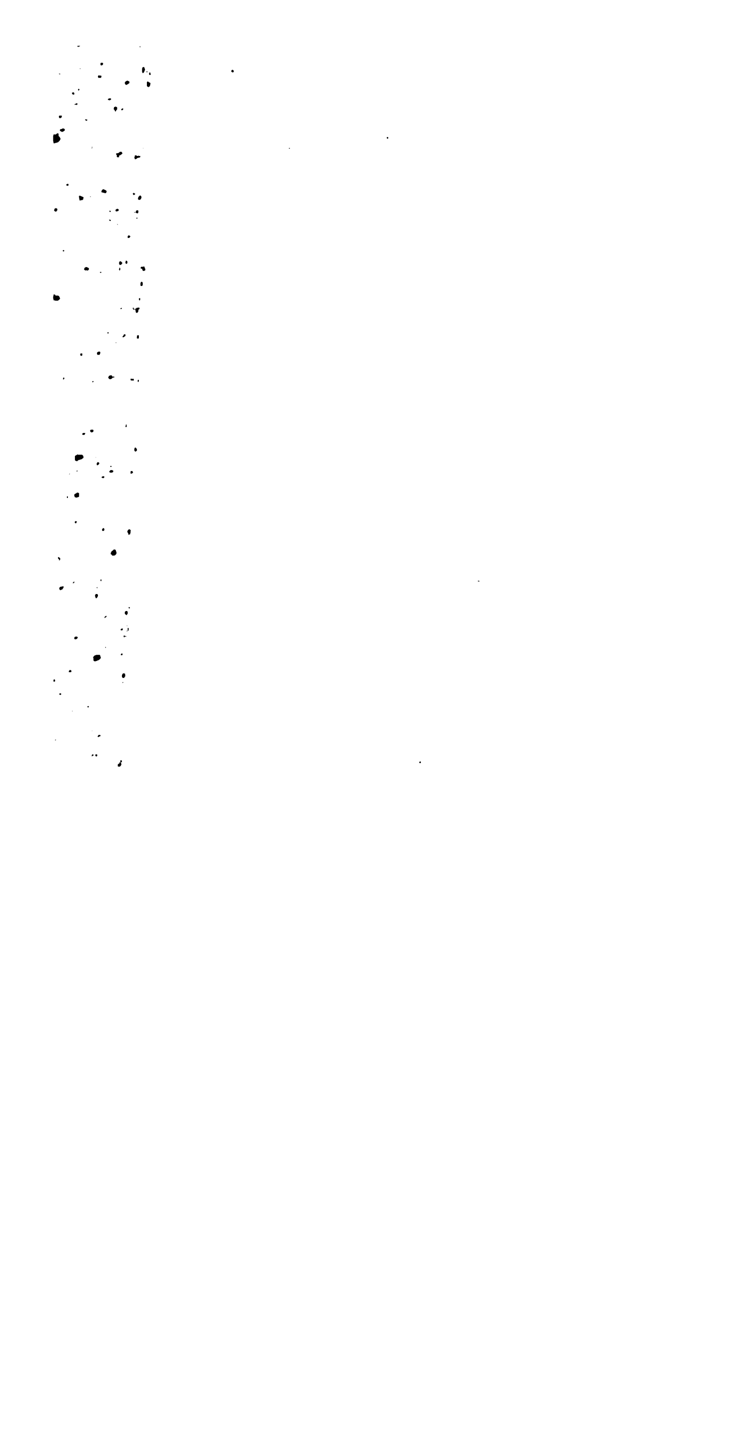
cage from which they had never known release, would still flutter against the bars, and, in the instinct of their unconquered nature, long for the untried and pathless air which they behold through their narrow grating;—so, pent in our cage of clay—the diviner instinct is not dead within us;—at times we sicken with indistinct and undefinable apprehensions of a more noble birthright—and the soul feels stirringly that its wings, which it doth but bruise in its dungeon-tenement, were designed by the Creator—who shapeth all things to their uses—for the enjoyment of the royalties of Heaven.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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THE STUDENT.

VOL. II.



ON

INFIDELITY IN LOVE.



ON

INFIDELITY IN LOVE.

who watches the extinction of a light which nothing can reillumine! It mostly happens too, that the first discovery is sudden. There is a deep trustfulness in a loving heart; it is blind to the gradual decrease of sympathy—its divine charity attributes the absent eye, the chilling word, to a thousand causes, save the true one; care—illness—some worldly trouble—some engrossing thought; and (poor fool that it is!) endeavours by additional tenderness, to compensate for the pain that is not of its own causing. Alas, the time has come, when it can no longer compensate! It hath ceased to be the all-in-all to its cruel partner. Custom has brought its invariable curse—and indifference gathers round the place in which we had garnered up our soul. At length the appalling light breaks upon us. We discover we are no longer loved. And what remedy have we? None! Our first, our natural feeling, is resentment. We are conscious of treachery; this ungrateful heart that has fallen from us, how have we prized and treasured it—how have we sought to shield it from

every arrow—how have we pleased ourselves, in solitude and in absence, with yearning thoughts of its faith and beauty;—no wit is ours no more! Then we break into wild reproaches—we become exacting—we watch every look—we guage every action—we are unfortunate—we weary—we offend. These, our agonies—our impetuous bursts of passion—our ironical and bitter taunts, to which we half expect, as heretofore, to hear the soft word that turneth away wrath—these only expedite the fatal hour; they are new crimes in us; the very proofs of our bitter love are treasured and repeated as reasons why we should be loved no more:—as if without a throe, without a murmur, we could resign ourselves to so great a loss. Alas—it is with fierce convulsions that the temple is rent in twain, and we hear the Divinity depart. Sometimes we stand in silence, and with a full heart, gazing upon those hard cold eyes which never again can melt in tenderness upon us. And our silence is dumb—its eloquence is gone. We are no longer understood. We long to die in order to be avenged.

We half pray for some great misfortune, some agonizing illness, that it may bring to us our soother and our nurse. We say, "In affliction or in sickness it could not thus desert us." We are mistaken. We are shelterless—the roof has been taken from our heads—we are exposed to any and every storm. Then comes a sharp and dread sentiment of loneliness and insecurity. We are left—weak children—in the dark. We are bereft more irrevocably than by death; for will even the Hereafter, that unites the happy and the lovingly, restore the love that has perished ere life be dim?

What shall we do? We have accustomed ourselves to love and to be loved. Can we turn to new ties, and seek in another that which is extinct in one? How often is such a resource in vain? Have we not given to this—the treacherous and the false friend—the best years of our life—the youth of our hearts—the flower of our affections? Did we not yield up the harv[illegible] is there left for another to gl[illegible] the crime of the moral in-



fidelity. The one who takes away from us his or her love, takes from us also the love of all else. We have no longer, perhaps, the youth and the attractions to engage affection. Once we might have chosen out of the world—now the time is past. Who shall love us in our sear and yellow leaf, as in that time, when we had most the qualities that win love? It was a beautiful sentiment of one whom her lord proposed to put away—"Give me, then, back," said she, "that which I brought to you." And the man answered, in his vulgar coarseness of soul, "Your fortune shall return to you." "I thought not of fortune," said the lady; "give me back my real wealth—give me back my beauty and my youth—give me back the virginity of soul—give me back the cheerful mind, and the heart that had never been disappointed."

Yes: it is of these that the unfaithful rob us, when they dismiss us back upon the world, and tell us with a bitter mockery to form new ties. In proportion to the time that we have been faithful—in proportion to the feel-

ings we have sacrificed—in proportion to the wealth of soul—of affection, of devotion, that we have consumed, are we shut out from the possibility of atonement elsewhere. But this is not all—the other occupations of the world are suddenly made stale and barren to us ! the daily avocations of life—the common pleasures—the social diversions so tame in themselves, had had their charm when we could share, and talk over, them with another. It was sympathy which made them sweet—the sympathy withdrawn they are nothing to us—worse than nothing. The talk has become the tinkling cymbal, and society the gallery of pictures. Ambition, toil, the great aims of life—even these cease abruptly to excite. What, in the first place, made labour grateful and ambition dear? Was it not the hope that their rewards would be reflected upon another self? And now there is no other self. And, in the second place, (and this is a newer consideration,) does it not require a certain calmness and freedom of mind for great efforts? Persuaded of the possession of what most we value,



we can look abroad with cheerfulness and hope;—the consciousness of a treasure inexhaustible by external failures, makes us speculative and bold. Now, all things are coloured by our despondency; our self-esteem—that necessary incentive to glory—is humbled and abased. Our pride has received a jarring and bitter shock. We no longer feel that we are equal to stern exertion. We wonder at what we have dared before. And therefore it is, that when Othello believes himself betrayed, the occupations of his whole life suddenly become burthensome and abhorred.

"Farewell," he saith,

> "Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!"

And then, as the necessary but unconscious link in the chain of thought, he continues at once—

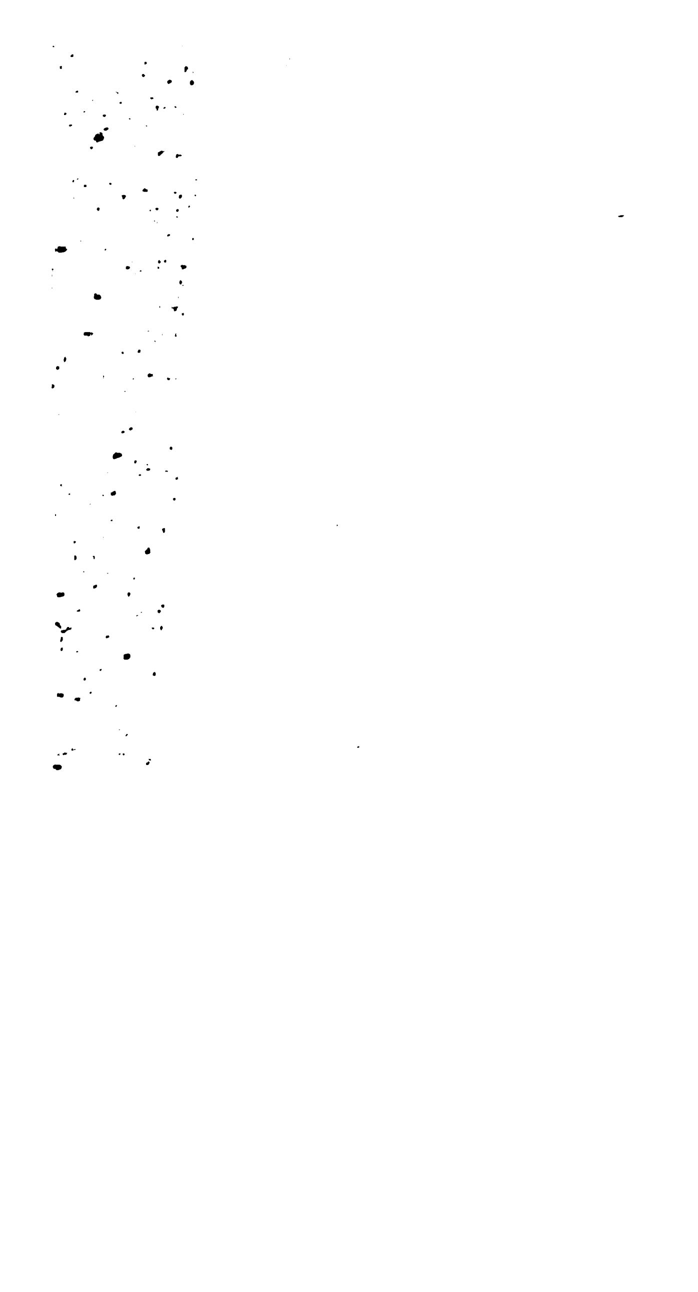
> "*Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,*
> That make ambition virtue! oh, farewell!
> Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!
Farewell!—*Othello's occupation's gone.*"

But there is another and a more permanent result from this bitter treason. Our trustfulness in human nature is diminished. We are no longer the credulous enthusiasts of Good. The pillars of the moral world seem shaken. We believe, we hope, no more from the faith of others. If the one whom we so worshipped, and so served—who knew us in our best years—to whom we have offered countless, daily offerings—whom we put in our heart of hearts—against whom if a world hinted, we had braved a world—if *this one* has deserted us, *who* then shall be faithful?

At length, we begin to reconcile ourselves to the worst; gradually we gather the moss of our feelings from this heart which has become to us as stone. Our pride hardens down into indifference. Ceasing to be loved, we cease to love. Seasons may roll away, all other feelings ebb

and flow. Ambition may change into apathy—generosity may sour into avarice—we may forget the enmities of years—we may make friends of foes; but the love we have lost is never renewed. On that dread vacuum of the breast the temple and the garden rise no more:—that feeling, be it hatred, be it scorn, be it indifference, which replaces love, endures to the last. And, altered for ever to the one—how many of us are altered for ever to the world;—neither so cheerful, nor so kind, nor so active in good, nor so incredulous of evil as we were before! The Deluge of Passion has rolled back—the Earth is green again. But we are in a new world. And the New World is but the sepulchre of the Old.





FI-HO-TI;

OR,

PLEASURES OF REPUTATION.

A CHINESE TALE.

who watches the extinction of a light which nothing can reillumine! It mostly happens too, that the first discovery is sudden. There is a deep trustfulness in a loving heart; it is blind to the gradual decrease of sympathy—its divine charity attributes the absent eye, the chilling word, to a thousand causes, save the true one; care—illness—some worldly trouble—some engrossing thought; and (poor fool that it is!) endeavours by additional tenderness, to compensate for the pain that is not of its own causing. Alas, the time has come, when it can no longer compensate! It hath ceased to be the all-in-all to its cruel partner. Custom has brought its invariable curse—and indifference gathers round the place in which we had garnered up our soul. At length the appalling light breaks upon us. We discover we are no longer loved. And what remedy have we? None! Our first, our natural feeling, is resentment. We are conscious of treachery; this ungrateful heart that has fallen from us, how have we prized and treasured it—how have we sought to shield it from

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We half pray for some great misfortune, some agonizing illness, that it may bring to us our soother and our nurse. We say, "In affliction or in sickness it could not thus desert us." We are mistaken. We are shelterless—the roof has been taken from our heads—we are exposed to any and every storm. Then comes a sharp and dread sentiment of loneliness and insecurity. We are left—weak children—in the dark. We are bereft more irrevocably than by death; for will even the Hereafter, that unites the happy dead that die lovingly, restore the love that has perished, ere life be dim?

What shall we do? We have accustomed ourselves to love and to be loved. Can we turn to new ties, and seek in another that which is extinct in one? How often is such a resource in vain! Have we not given to this—the treacherous and the false friend — the best years of our life — the youth of our hearts—the flower of our affections? Did we not yield up the harvest? how little is there left for another to glean! This makes the crime of the moral in-

fidelity. The one who takes away from us his or her love, takes from us also the love of all else. We have no longer, perhaps, the youth and the attractions to engage affection. Once we might have chosen out of the world—now the time is past. Who shall love us in our sear and yellow leaf, as in that time, when we had most the qualities that win love? It was a beautiful sentiment of one whom her lord proposed to put away—"Give me, then, back," said she, "that which I brought to you." And the man answered, in his vulgar coarseness of soul, "Your fortune shall return to you." "I thought not of fortune," said the lady; "give me back my real wealth—give me back my beauty and my youth—give me back the virginity of soul—give me back the cheerful mind, and the heart that had never been disappointed."

Yes: it is of these that the unfaithful rob us, when they dismiss us back upon the world, and tell us with a bitter mockery to form new ties. In proportion to the time that we have been faithful—in proportion to the feel-

ings we have sacrificed—in proportion to the wealth of soul—of affection, of devotion, that we have consumed, are we shut out from the possibility of atonement elsewhere. But this is not all—the other occupations of the world are suddenly made stale and barren to us! the daily avocations of life—the common pleasures—the social diversions so tame in themselves, had had their charm when we could share, and talk over, them with another. It was sympathy which made them sweet—the sympathy withdrawn they are nothing to us—worse than nothing. The talk has become the tinkling cymbal, and society the gallery of pictures. Ambition, toil, the great aims of life—even these cease abruptly to excite. What, in the first place, made labour grateful and ambition dear? Was it not the hope that their rewards would be reflected upon another self? And now there is no other self. And, in the second place, (and this is a newer consideration,) does it not require a certain calmness and freedom of mind for great efforts? Persuaded of the possession of what most we value,

we can look abroad with cheerfulness and hope;—the consciousness of a treasure inexhaustible by external failures, makes us speculative and bold. Now, all things are coloured by our despondency; our self-esteem—that necessary incentive to glory—is humbled and abased. Our pride has received a jarring and bitter shock. We no longer feel that we are equal to stern exertion. We wonder at what we have dared before. And therefore it is, that when Othello believes himself betrayed, the occupations of his whole life suddenly become burthensome and abhorred.

"Farewell," he saith,

> "Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!"

And then, as the necessary but unconscious link in the chain of thought, he continues at once—

> "*Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,*
> That make ambition virtue! oh, farewell!
> Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!
Farewell!—*Othello's occupation's gone.*"

But there is another and a more permanent result from this bitter treason. Our trustfulness in human nature is diminished. We are no longer the credulous enthusiasts of Good. The pillars of the moral world seem shaken. We believe, we hope, no more from the faith of others. If the one whom we so worshipped, and so served—who knew us in our best years—to whom we have offered countless, daily offerings—whom we put in our heart of hearts—against whom if a world hinted, we had braved a world—if *this one* has deserted us, *who* then shall be faithful?

At length, we begin to reconcile ourselves to the worst; gradually we gather the moss of our feelings from this heart which has become to us as stone. Our pride hardens down into indifference. Ceasing to be loved, we cease to love. Seasons may roll away, all other feelings ebb

and flow. Ambition may change into apathy—generosity may sour into avarice—we may forget the enmities of years—we may make friends of foes; but the love we have lost is never renewed. On that dread vacuum of the breast the temple and the garden rise no more:—that feeling, be it hatred, be it scorn, be it indifference, which replaces love, endures to the last. And, altered for ever to the one—how many of us are altered for ever to the world;—neither so cheerful, nor so kind, nor so active in good, nor so incredulous of evil as we were before! The Deluge of Passion has rolled back—the Earth is green again. But we are in a new world. And the New World is but the sepulchre of the Old.

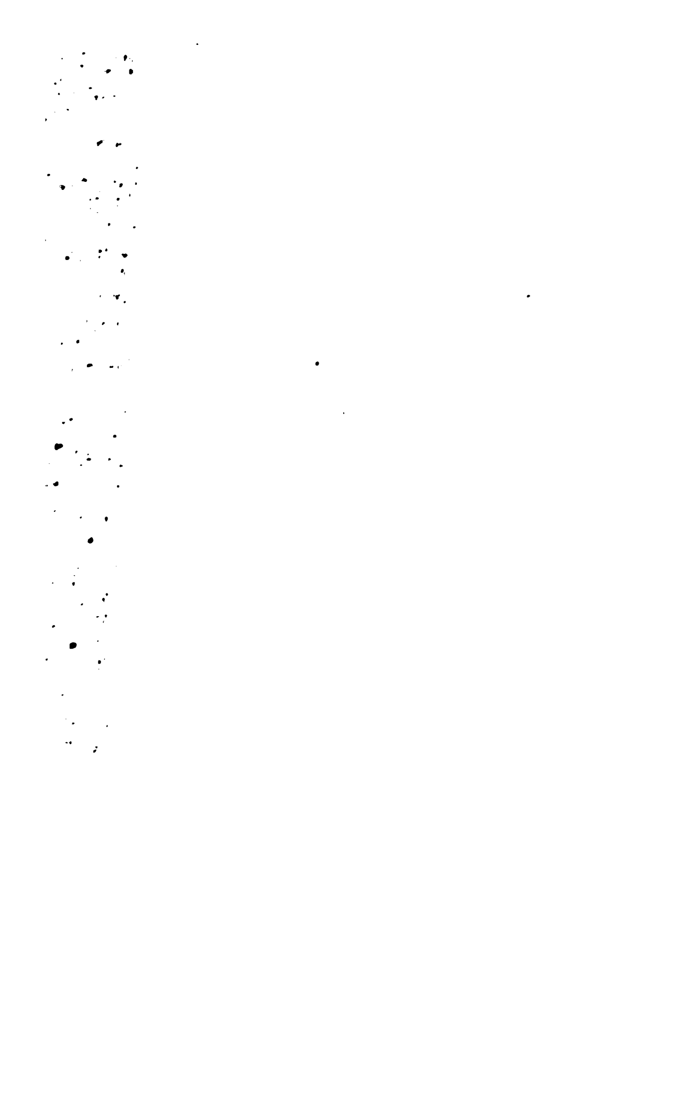


FI-HO-TI;

OR,

THE PLEASURES OF REPUTATION.

A CHINESE TALE.



FI-HO-TI;

OR,

THE PLEASURES OF REPUTATION.

Fi-ho-ti was considered a young man of talents; he led, in Pekin, a happy and comfortable life. In the prime of youth, of a highly-respectable family, and enjoying a most agreeable competence, he was exceedingly popular among the gentlemen whom he entertained at his board, and the ladies who thought he might propose. Although the Chinese are not generally sociable, Fi-ho-ti had ventured to set the fashion of giving entertainments, in which ceremony was banished for mirth. All the pleasures of life

awake during the day, or e
slumber during the night.

In an evil hour, it so happe
discovered that he possessed th
referred to. A philosopher,—
his uncle, had the double righ
sophy and relationship, to say
pleasant to him,—took it into
very indignant at the happy life
so peacefully enjoyed.

Accordingly, one beautiful mo
our young Chin-Epicurean. H
his summer-house, stretched
cushions, quaffing the most de
the finest little porcelain cups in
ing a Chinese novel, and enlive
from time to time, by a light co

could be more unphilosophical; for the duty of Philosophy being to charm us with life, she is anxious, in the first place, to make it a burden to us. The goddess is enamoured of patience, but indignant at pleasure.

Our sage was a man very much disliked and very much respected. Fi-ho-ti rose from his cushions, a little ashamed of being detected in so agreeable an indolence, and reminded for the first time, of the maxims of Chinese morality, which hold it highly improper for a gentleman to be seen with a lady. The novel fell from his hand; and the young lady, frightened at the long beard and the long nails of the philosopher, would have run away, if her feet would have allowed her; as it was, she summoned her attendants, and hastened to complain to her friends of the manner in which the pleasantest *têtes-à-têtes* could be spoilt, when young men were so unfortunate as to have philosophers for uncles.

The Mandarin,—for Fi-ho-ti's visiter enjoyed no less a dignity, and was entitled to wear a

" Are you not ashamed, yo
" of the life that you lea
ashamed to be so indolent and
possess talents; you are in th
you have already attained the
—are you deaf to the noble v
Your country calls upon you fo
to distinguish your name,—rec
ple of Confucius,—give yourse
be wise and be great."

Much more to this effect
darin, for he loved to hear h
like all men privileged to give
cied that he was wonderfull
this instance, his vanity did
for it was the vanity of another

* The distinction of Mandarins
fourth order.

ed. Fi-ho-ti was moved; he felt he had been very foolish to be happy so long. Visions of disquietude and fame floated before him: he listened with attention to the exhortations of the philosopher; he resolved to distinguish himself, and to be wise.

The Mandarin was charmed with the success of his visit; it was a great triumph to disturb so much enjoyment. He went home, and commenced a tract upon the advantages of philosophy.

Every one knows that in China learning alone is the passport to the offices of state: What rank and fortune are in other countries, learning is in the Celestial Empire. Fi-ho-ti surrendered himself to Knowledge. He retired to a solitary cavern, near upon Kai-fon-gu; he filled his retreat with books and instruments of science; he renounced all social intercourse; the herbs of the plain and the water of the spring sufficed the tastes hitherto accustomed to the most delicious viands of Pekin. Forgetful of love and of pleasure, he consigned three of the fairest years

Fired with increasing
returned to Pekin. He co
though light and witty
gay, was the origin of a n
phy. It was at once bold
oldest Mandarin or the
Pekin could equally apprec
one word, Fi-ho-ti's book b
ho-ti was *the* author of his

Delighted by the novelty
our young student more tha
self to literary pursuits. I
again succeeded;—all the
Fi-ho-ti had established his
obtained the dazzling distinct

Was Fi-ho-ti the happier f
You shall judge.

He went to

The philosopher received him with a frigid embarrassment. He talked of the weather and the Emperor,—the last pagoda and the new fashion in tea-cups: he said not a word about his nephew's books. Fi-ho-ti was piqued; he introduced the subject of his own accord.

"Ah!" said the philosopher, drily, "I understand you have written something that pleases the women; no doubt you will grow solid as your judgment increases. But, to return to the tea-cups ——"

Fi-ho-ti was chagrined: he had lost the affection of his learned uncle for ever; for he was now considered to be more learned than his uncle himself. The common mortification in success is to find that your own family usually hate you for it. "My uncle no longer loves me," thought he, as he re-entered his palanquin. "This is a misfortune."—Alas!—it was the effect of REPUTATION!

The heart of Fi-ho-ti was naturally kind and genial; though the thirst of pleasure was cooled in his veins, he still cherished the social

desires of friendship. He summoned once more around him the comrades of his youth: he fancied they, at least, would be delighted to find their friend not unworthy of their affection. He received them with open arms;—they returned his greeting with shyness, and an awkward affectation of sympathy;—their conversation no longer flowed freely—they were afraid of committing themselves before so clever a man;—they felt they were no longer with an equal, and yet they refused to acknowledge a superior. Fi-ho-ti perceived, with indescribable grief, that a wall had grown up between himself and the companions of past years; their pursuits, their feelings, were no longer the same. They were not proud of his success—they were jealous;—the friends of his youth were the critics of his manhood.

"This, too, is a misfortune," thought Fi-ho-ti, as he threw himself at night upon his couch.—Very likely:—it was the effect of REPUTATION!

"But if the old friends are no more, I will gain new," thought the student. "Men of the

same pursuits will have the same sympathies. I aspire to be a sage: I will court the friendship of sages."

This was a notable idea of Fi-ho-ti's. He surrounded himself with the authors, the wits, and the wise men of Pekin. They ate his dinners,—they made him read their manuscripts —(and a bad handwriting in Chinese is no trifle!)—they told him he was a wonderful genius,—and they abused him anonymously every week in the Pekin journals; for China is perhaps the only despotism in the world in which the press is entirely free. The heart of Fi-ho-ti, yearning after friendship, found it impossible to expect a single friend amongst the literati of China; they were all too much engrossed with themselves to dream of affection for another. They had no talk—no thought—no feeling—except that which expressed love for their own books, and hatred for the books of their contemporaries.

One day Fi-ho-ti had the misfortune to break his leg. The most intimate of his acquaintance

performed on him.

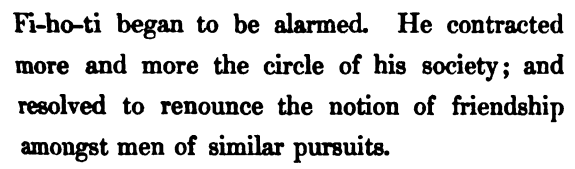
"Ah!" said the author, "I
how very unfortunate!"

"You are extremely oblig
touched by his visiter's eviden

"Yes, it is particularly unh
cident should occur just at th
wanted to consult you about th
new book before it is publishe

The broken leg of his frien
author only as an interruption
reading his own works.

But, above all, Fi-ho-ti foun
trust men who gave the worst
of each other. If you believed
selves, so envious, malignant
principled a set of men as the
never were [illegible]



Fi-ho-ti began to be alarmed. He contracted more and more the circle of his society; and resolved to renounce the notion of friendship amongst men of similar pursuits.

Even in the remotest provinces of the Celestial Empire, the writings of Fi-ho-ti were greatly approved. The gentlemen quoted him at their tea, and the ladies wondered whether he was good-looking; but this applause—this interest that he inspired—never reached the ears of Fi-ho-ti. He beheld not the smiles he called forth by his wit, nor the tears he excited by his pathos:—all that he saw of the effects of his reputation was in the abuse he received in the Pekin journals; he there read, every week and every month, that he was but a very poor sort of creature. One journal called him a fool, another a wretch; a third seriously deposed that he was hump-backed; a fourth that none of his sentiments could be found in the works of Confucius. In Pekin, any insinuation of originality is considered as a suspicion of the most unpardonable guilt. Other journals, indeed, did not

to reply to all the Pekin
assured by his flatterers t
mately prevail, and poste
"Alas!" thought Fi-ho-ti,
a culprit all my life, in ord
quitted after death? Is th
until I am past the powe
this is a misfortune!"—Ve
necessary consequence of F

Fi-ho-ti now began t
desire of fame was a chi
credulous enough to follo
equally fallacious. He said
poor and vain in me to desi
raise my heart to a more
me desire only to instruct o

Fraught with this lofty
conceived a more solid

to write what was brilliant, but to discover what was true. He erased, without mercy, the most lively images—the most sparkling aphorisms—if even a doubt of their moral utility crossed his mind. He wasted two additional years of the short summer of youth: he gave the fruits of his labour to the world in a book of the most elaborate research, the only object of which was to enlighten his countrymen. "This, at least, they cannot abuse," thought he, when he finished the last line. Ah! how much was he mistaken!

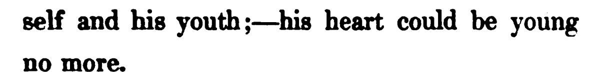
Doubtless, in other countries the public are remarkably grateful to any author for correcting their prejudices and combating their foibles; but in China, attack one orthodox error, prove to the people that you wish to elevate and improve them, and renounce all happiness, all tranquillity, for the rest of your life!

Fi-ho-ti's book was received with the most frigid neglect by the philosophers,—First, because the Pekin philosophers are visionaries, and it did not build a system upon visions,—and

secondly, because of Fi-ho-ti himself they were exceedingly jealous. But from his old friends, the journalists of Pekin—O Fo!—with what invective, what calumny, what abuse it was honoured! He had sought to be the friend of his race,—he was stigmatized as the direst of its enemies. He was accused of all manner of secret designs; the painted slippers of the Mandarins were in danger: and he had evidently intended to muffle all the bells of the grand pagoda! Alas! let no man wish to be a saint unless he is prepared to be a martyr.

"Is this injustice?" cried Fi-ho-ti to his flatterers. "No," said they, with one voice; "No, Fi-ho-ti,—it is REPUTATION!"

Thoroughly disgusted with his ambition, Fi-ho-ti now resolved to resign himself once more to pleasure. Again he heard music, and again he feasted and made love. In vain!—the zest, the appetite was gone. The sterner pursuits he had cultivated of late years had rendered his mind incapable of appreciating the luxuries of frivolity. He had opened a gulf between him-



self and his youth;—his heart could be young no more.

"One faithful breast shall console me for all," thought he. "Yang-y-se is beautiful and smiles upon me; I will woo and win her."

Fi-ho-ti surrendered his whole soul to the new passion he had conceived. Yang-y-se listened to him favourably. He could not complain of cruelty: he fancied himself beloved. With the generous and unselfish ardour that belonged to his early character, and which in China is so especially uncommon, he devoted his future years to—he lavished the treasure of his affections upon—the object of his love. For some weeks he enjoyed a dream of delight: he woke from it too soon. A rival beauty was willing to attach to herself the wealthy and generous Fi-ho-ti. "Why," said she, one day, "why do you throw yourself away upon Yang-y-se? Do you fancy she loves you? You are mistaken: she has no heart; it is only her vanity that makes her willing to admit you as her slave." Fi-ho-ti was incredulous and indignant. "Read this letter,"

said the rival beauty. "Yang-y-se wrote it to me but the other day."

Fi-ho-ti read as follows:—

"We had a charming supper with the gay author last night, and wished much for you. You need not rally me on my affection for him; I do not love him, but I am pleased to command his attentions; in a word, my vanity is flattered with the notion of chaining to myself one of the most distinguished persons in Pekin. But—love—ah! *that* is quite another thing."

Fi-ho-ti's eyes were now thoroughly opened. He recalled a thousand little instances which had proved that Yang-y-se had been only in love with his celebrity.

He saw at once the great curse of distinction. Be renowned, and you can never be loved for yourself! As you are hated not for your vices, but your success, so are you loved not for your talents, but their fame. A man who has reputation is like a tower whose height is estimated by the length of its shadow. The sensitive and high-wrought mind of Fi-ho-ti now gave way to

a gloomy despondency. Being himself misinterpreted, calumniated, and traduced; and feeling that none loved him but through vanity, that he stood alone with his enemies in the world, he became the prey to misanthropy, and gnawed by perpetual suspicion. He distrusted the smiles of others. The faces of men seemed to him as masks; he felt everywhere the presence of deceit. Yet these feelings had made no part of his early character, which was naturally frank, joyous, and confiding. Was the change a misfortune? Possibly; but it was the effect of REPUTATION!

About this time, too, Fi-ho-ti began to feel the effects of the severe study he had undergone. His health gave way; his nerves were shattered; he was in that terrible revolution in which the Mind—that vindictive labourer—wreaks its ire upon the enfeebled taskmaster, the Body. He walked the ghost of his former self.

One day he was standing pensively beside one of the streams that intersect the gardens of

Pekin, and, gazing upon the waters, he muttered his bitter reveries. "Ah!" thought he, "why was I ever discontented with happiness? I was young, rich, cheerful; and life to me was a perpetual holyday; my friends caressed me, my mistress loved me for myself. No one hated, or maligned, or envied me. Like yon leaf upon the water, my soul danced merrily over the billows of existence. But courage, my heart! I have at least done some good; benevolence must experience gratitude—young Psi-ching, for instance. I have the pleasure of thinking that *he* must love me; I have made his fortune; I have brought him from obscurity into repute; for it has been my character as yet never to be jealous of others!"

Psi-ching was a young poet, who had been secretary to Fi-ho-ti. The student had discovered genius and insatiable ambition in the young man; he had directed and advised his pursuits; he had raised him into fortune and notice; he had enabled him to marry the mistress he loved. Psi-ching vowed to him everlasting gratitude.

Vhile Fi-ho-ti was thus consoling himself
ı the idea of Psi-ching's affection, it so hap-
ed that Psi-ching, and one of the philoso-
rs of the day whom the public voice esteemed
ond to Fi-ho-ti, passed along the banks of
river. A tree hid Fi-ho-ti from their sight;
y were earnestly conversing, and Fi-ho-ti
rd his own name more than once repeated.

"Yes," said Psi-ching, "poor Fi-ho-ti cannot
much longer; his health is broken; you
lose a formidable rival when he is dead."

he philosopher smiled. "Why, it will cer-
y be a stone out of my way. You are con-
y with him, I think."

am. He is a charming person; but the
ct is, that, seeing he cannot live much
I am keeping a journal of his last days;
rd, I shall write the history of my dis-
ed friend. I think it will take much, and
rodigious sale."

lkers passed on.

i did not die so soon as was expected,
hing never published the journal from

which he anticipated so much profit. But Fi-ho-ti ceased to be remarkable for the kindness of his heart and the philanthropy of his views. He was rather known for the sourness of his temper and the bitterness of his satire.

By degrees he rose into public eminence, and on the accession of a new Emperor, Fi-ho-ti was commanded to ask any favour that he desired. The office of Tsung-tuh (or viceroy) of the rich province of Che-kiang, was just vacant. The courtiers waited breathless to hear the vacancy requested. The Emperor smiled benignly—it was the post he secretly intended for Fi-ho-ti. "Son of heaven, and lord of a myriad of years," said the favourite, "suffer then thy servant to retire into one of the monasteries of Kai-fon-gu, and—*to change his name!*"

The last hope of peace that was left to Fi-ho-ti, was to escape from—his REPUTATION.

THE

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

IN MEN AND BOOKS.





THE

KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD

IN MEN AND BOOKS.

ROYALTY and its symbols were abolished in France. A showman of wild beasts possessed an immense Bengal tiger, (the pride of his flock,) commonly called the *Royal Tiger*. What did our showman do?—Why, he knew the world, and he changed the name of the beast, from the *Tigre* Royal to the *Tigre* National! Horace Walpole was particularly charmed with this anecdote, for he knew the world as well as the showman. It is exactly these little things—the happy turn of a phrase—a well-timed pleasantry,

(which no unobservant man ever thinks of,) that, while seeming humour, are in reality wisdom. There are changes in the vein of wit, as in every thing else. Sir William Temple tells us, that on the return of Charles II. none were more out of fashion than the old Earl of Norwich, who was esteemed the greatest wit of the time of Charles the First. But it is clear that the Earl of Norwich must have wanted knowledge of the world; he did not feel, as by an instinct, like the showman, how to vary an epithet —he stuck to the last to his *tigre royal!*

This knowledge of the world baffles our calculations—it does not always require experience. Some men take to it intuitively; their first step in life exhibits the same profound mastery over the minds of their contemporaries—the same subtle consideration—the same felicitous address, as distinguish the close of their career. Congreve had written his comedies at twenty-five; the best anecdotes of the acuteness of Cyrus are those of his boyhood. I should like, above all things, a veracious account of the

childhood of Talleyrand. What a world of shrewdness may he have vented in trundling his hoop! Shakspeare has given us the madness of Hamlet the youth, and of Lear the old man—but there is a far deeper wisdom in the young man's thoughts than those of the old man.

Minds early accustomed to solitude usually make the keenest observers of the world, and chiefly for this reason—when few objects are presented to our contemplation, we seize them—we ruminate over them—we think, again and again, upon all the features they present to our examination; and we thus master the knowledge of the great book of Mankind, as Eugene Aram mastered that of Learning—by studying five lines at a time, and ceasing not from our labour till those are thoroughly acquired. A boy, whose attention has not been distracted by a multiplicity of objects—who, living greatly alone, is obliged therefore to think, not as a task, but as a diversion, emerges at last into the world—a shy man, but a deep observer. Accustomed to reflection, he is not dazzled by novelty; while it

strikes his eye, it occupies his mind. Hence, if he sit down to describe what he sees, he describes it justly at once, and at first; and more vividly, perhaps, than he might in after-life, because it is newer to him. Perhaps, too, the moral eye resembles the physical—by custom familiarizes itself with delusion, and inverts, mechanically, the objects presented to it, till the deceit becomes more natural than nature itself.

There are men who say they know the world, because they know its vices. Could we admit this claim, what sage would rival an officer at Bow-street, or the turnkey at Newgate? This would indeed be knowledge of the world, if the world were inhabited only by rogues. But pretenders of this sort are as bad judges of our minds as a physician would be of our bodies, if he had never seen any but those in a diseased state. Such a man would fancy health itself a disease! We generally find, indeed, that men are governed by their *weaknesses*, not their *vices*, and those weaknesses are often the most amiable part about them.

The wavering Jaffier betrays his friend through a weakness, which a hardened criminal might equally have felt, and which, in that criminal, might have been the origin of his guilt. It is the knowledge of these weaknesses, as by a glance, that serves a man better in the understanding and conquest of his species, than a knowledge of the vices to which they lead—it is better to seize the one cause than ponder over the thousand effects. It is the former knowledge which I chiefly call the knowledge of the world. It is this which immortalised Moliere in the drama, and distinguishes Talleyrand in action.

It has been asked whether the same worldly wisdom which we admire in a writer would, had occasion brought him prominently forward, have made him equally successful in action? Certainly not, as a necessary consequence. Swift was the most sensible writer of his day, and one of the least sensible politicians, in the selfish sense—the only sense in which he knew it—of the word. What knowledge of the world in

"Don Juan" and in Byron's "Correspondence" —what seeming want of that knowledge in the great poet's susceptibility to attack, on the one hand, and his wanton trifling with his character, on the other! How is this difference between the man and the writer to be accounted for? Because, in the writer, the infirmities of constitution are either concealed or decorated by genius—not so in the man: fretfulness, spleen morbid sensitiveness, eternally spoil our plans in life—but they often give an interest to our plans on paper. Byron, quarrelling with the world, as Childe Harold, proves his genius; but Byron quarrelling with the world in his own person, betrays his folly! To show wisdom in a book, it is but necessary that we should possess the theoretical wisdom; but in life, it requires not only the theoretical wisdom, but the practical ability to act up to it. We may know exactly what we ought to do, but we may not have the fortitude to do it. "Now," says the shy man in love, "I ought to go and talk to my mistress— my rival is with her—I ought to make myself

as agreeable as possible—I ought to throw that fellow in the shade by my *bons mots* and my compliments." Does he do so? No! he sits in a corner and scowls at the lady. He is in the miserable state described by Persius. He knows what is good and cannot perform it. Yet this man, if an author, from the very circumstance of feeling so bitterly that his constitution is stronger than his reason, would have made his lover in a book all that he could not be himself in reality. Hence the best advisers of *our* conduct are often those who are the least prudent in the regulation of their own. Their sense is clear when exerted for us, but vanity, humour, passion, blind them when they act for themselves.

There is a sort of wit peculiar to knowledge of the world, and we usually find that writers, who are supposed to have the most exhibited that knowledge in their books, are also commonly esteemed the wittiest authors of their country—Horace, Plautus, Moliere, Le Sage, Voltaire, Cervantes, Shakspeare, Fielding, Swift;*

* Let me mention two political writers of the present

and this is, because the essence of the most refined species of wit *is truth.* Even in the solemn and grave Tacitus, we come perpetually to sudden turns—striking points, of sententious brilliancy, which make us smile, from the depth itself of their importance;—an aphorism is always on the borders of an epigram.*

It is remarkable that there is scarcely any *very popular* author of great imaginative power, in whose works we do not recognise that common sense which is knowledge of the world, and which is so generally supposed by the superficial to be in direct opposition to the imaginative faculty. When an author does not possess it eminently, he is never eminently *popular*, whatever be his

day—men equally remarkable for their wit and wisdom—Sidney Smith, and the Editor of the "Examiner," Mr. Fonblanque; the latter writer, (however we may differ from his politics,) is perhaps the greatest master of that art which makes "words like sharp swords," that our age has produced.

* And every one will recollect the sagacious sneer of Gibbon.

fame. Compare Scott and Shelley, the two most *imaginative* authors of their time. The one, in his wildest flights, never loses sight of common sense—there is an affinity between him and his humblest reader; nay, the more discursive the flight, the closer that affinity becomes. We are even more wrapt with the author when he is with his Spirits of the Mountain and Fell—with the mighty dead at Melrose, than when he is leading us through the humours of a guard-room, or confiding to us the interview of lovers. But Shelley disdained common sense. Of his "Prince Athanase," we have no earthly comprehension—with his "Prometheus" we have no human sympathies; and the grander he becomes, the less popular we find him. Writers who do not, in theory, know their kind, may be admired, but they can never be popular. And when we hear men of unquestionable genius complain of not being appreciated by the herd, it is because they are not themselves skilled in the feelings of the herd. For what is knowledge of mankind,

but the knowledge of their feelings, their humours, their caprices, their passions?—touch these, and you gain attention—develope these, and you have conquered your audience.

Among writers of an inferior reputation we often discover a sufficient shrewdness and penetration into human foibles to startle us in details, while they cannot carry their knowledge far enough to please us on the whole. They can paint nature by a happy hit, but they violate all the likeness before they have concluded the plot—they charm us with a reflection and revolt us by a character. Sir John Suckling is one of these writers—his correspondence is witty and thoughtful, and his plays—but little known in comparison to his songs—abound with just remarks and false positions, the most natural lines and the most improbable inventions. Two persons in one of these plays are under sentence of execution, and the poet hits off the vanity of the one by a stroke worthy of a much greater dramatist.

"I have something troubles me," says Pellagrin.

"What's that?" asks his friend.

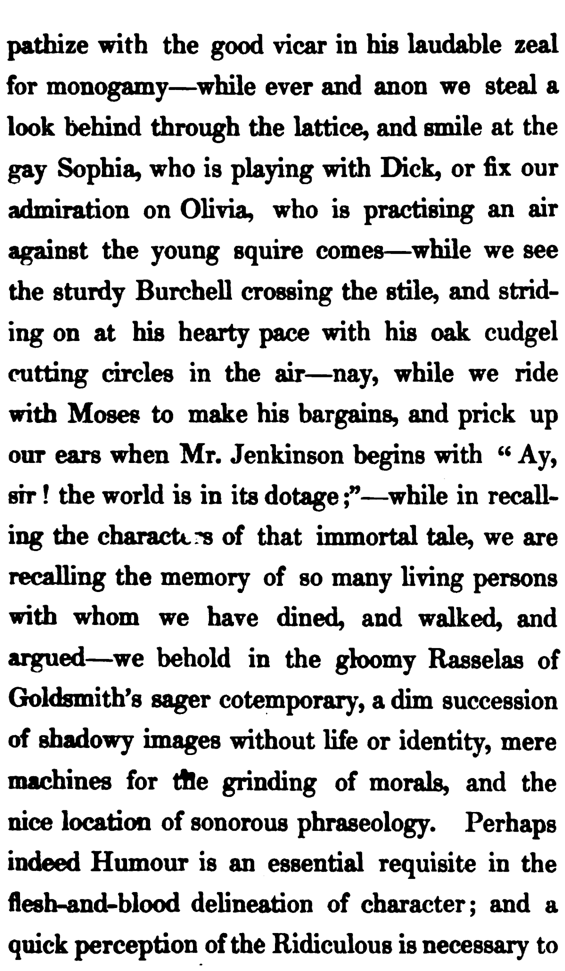
"The people," replies Pellagrin, "will say, as we go along, '*thou art the properer fellow!*'"

Had the whole character been conceived like that sentence, I should not have forgotten the name of the play, and instead of making a joke, the author would have consummated a creation. Both Madame de Stael and Rousseau appear to me to have possessed this sort of imperfect knowledge. Both are great in aphorisms, and feeble in realizing conceptions of flesh and blood. When Madame de Stael tells us "that great losses, so far from binding men more closely to the advantages they still have left, at once loosen all ties of affection," she speaks like one versed in the mysteries of the human heart, and expresses exactly what she wishes to convey; but when she draws the character of Corinne's lover, she not only confounds all the moral qualities into one impossible compound, but she utterly fails in what she evidently attempts to picture.

The proud, sensitive, generous, high-minded Englishman, with a soul at once alive to genius, and fearing its effect—daring as a soldier, timid as a man—the slave of love that tells him to scorn the world, and of opinion that tells him to adore it—this is the new, the delicate, the many-coloured character Madame de Stael conceived, and nothing can be more unlike the heartless and whining pedant she has accomplished.

In Rousseau, every sentence Lord *Edouard* utters is full of beauty, and sometimes of depth, and yet those sentences give us no conception of the utterer himself. The expressions are all soul, and the character is all clay—nothing can be more brilliant than the sentiments, or more heavy than the speaker.

It is a curious fact that the graver writers have not often succeeded in plot and character in proportion to their success in the allurement of reflection, or the graces of style. While Goldsmith makes us acquainted with all the personages of his unrivalled story—while we sit at the threshold in the summer evenings and sym-



pathize with the good vicar in his laudable zeal for monogamy—while ever and anon we steal a look behind through the lattice, and smile at the gay Sophia, who is playing with Dick, or fix our admiration on Olivia, who is practising an air against the young squire comes—while we see the sturdy Burchell crossing the stile, and striding on at his hearty pace with his oak cudgel cutting circles in the air—nay, while we ride with Moses to make his bargains, and prick up our ears when Mr. Jenkinson begins with "Ay, sir! the world is in its dotage;"—while in recalling the characters of that immortal tale, we are recalling the memory of so many living persons with whom we have dined, and walked, and argued—we behold in the gloomy Rasselas of Goldsmith's sager cotemporary, a dim succession of shadowy images without life or identity, mere machines for the grinding of morals, and the nice location of sonorous phraseology. Perhaps indeed Humour is an essential requisite in the flesh-and-blood delineation of character; and a quick perception of the Ridiculous is necessary to

the accurate insight into the True. We can better ascertain the profundity of Machiavel after we have enjoyed the unrivalled humour of his novel.

That delightful egotist—half-good-fellow, half-sage, half-rake, half-divine, the pet gossip of philosophy, the—in one word—inimitable and unimitated Montaigne, insists upon it in right earnest, that *continual* cheerfulness is the most indisputable sign of wisdom, and that her estate, like that of things in the regions above the moon, is always calm, cloudless, and serene. And in the same essay he recites the old story of Demetrius the grammarian, who, finding in the Temple of Delphos a knot of philosophers chatting away in high glee and comfort, said, "I am greatly mistaken, gentlemen, or by your pleasant countenances you are not engaged in any very profound discourse." Whereon Heracleon answered the grammarian with a "Pshaw, my good friend! it does very well for fellows who live in a perpetual anxiety to know whether the future tense of the verb *Ballo* should be spelt

with one *l* or two, to knit their brows and look solemn; but we who are engaged in discoursing of true philosophy, are cheerful as amatter of course!" Heracleon the magician, knew what he was about when he resolved to be wise. And yet, after all, it is our constitution and not our learning, that makes us one thing or the other—grave or gay, lively or severe! We may form our philosophy in one school, but our feelings may impel us to another; and while our tenets rejoice with Democritus, our hearts may despond with Heraclitus. And, in fact, it requires not only all that our wisdom can teach us, but perhaps, also, something of a constitution of mind naturally sanguine and elastic, to transmute into golden associations the baser ores of our knowledge of the world. Deceit and Disappointment are but sorry stimulants to the Spirits! "The pleasure of the honey will not pay for the smart of the sting."*

As we know, or fancy that we know, mankind, there is a certain dimness that falls upon the

* Jeremy Taylor, Sermon vi. Part 2.

glory of all we see. "The lily is withered, the purple of the violet turned into paleness;"* without growing perhaps more selfish, we contract the circle of our enjoyments. We do not hazard—we do not venture as we once did. The sea that rolls before us proffers to our curiosity no port that we have not already seen. About this time, too, our ambition changes its character—it becomes more a thing of custom than of ardour. We have begun our career—shame forbids us to leave it; but I question whether any man moderately wise, does not see how small is the reward of pursuit. Nay, ask the oldest, the most hacknied adventurer of the world, and you will find he has some dream at his heart, which is more cherished than all the honours he seeks—some dream perhaps of a happy and serene retirement which has lain at his breast since he was a boy, and which he will never realize. The trader and his retreat at Highgate are but the type of Walpole and his palace at Houghton. The worst feature

* Jeremy Taylor. Contemplations of the State of Man.

in our knowledge of the world is, that we are wise to little purpose—we penetrate the hearts of others, but we do not content our own. Every wise man feels that he ought not to be ambitious, nor covetous, nor subject to emotion—yet the wisest go on toiling, and burning to the last. Men who have declaimed most against ambition have been among the most ambitious; so that, at the best, we only become wise for the sake of writing books which the world seldom values till we are dead—or of making laws and speeches, which, when dead, the world hastens to forget. "When all is done, human life is at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over." *

* Sir William Temple.



THE

TALE OF KOSEM KESAMIM,

THE MAGICIAN.





THE

TALE OF KOSEM KESAMIM,

THE MAGICIAN.*

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It was deep night, and the Magician suddenly stood before me. "Arise," said he, "and let

* This tale, complete in itself, is extracted from a work at present crude and unfinished, but which I may hereafter remodel and complete—a philosophical Prose-Poem, in which, through the means, sometimes of humour, sometimes of terror, certain social and metaphysical problems will be worked out. I need scarcely say that the chief task in such a composition would be to avoid any imitation of the Faust.

us go forth upon the surface of the world."* I rose, and followed the sorcerer until we came to the entrance of a cavern. Pursuing its subterranean course for some minutes,—with the rushing sound of prisoned waters loud and wild upon the ear, we came at length to a spot where the atmosphere struck upon my breath with a chill and earthy freshness; and presently, through a fissure in the rock, the sudden whiteness of the moon broke in, and lit up, partially, walls radiant with spars, and washed by a deep stream, that wound its mysterious way to the upper air. And now, gliding through the chasm, we stood in a broad cell, with its lofty arch open to the sea. Column and spire (brilliant with various crystallizations—spars of all hues) sprang lightly up on either side of this cavern—and with a leap, and a mighty voice, the stream, whose course we had been tracking, rushed into the arms of the great Sea. Along that sea, star after star mirrored its

* The Narrator is supposed to have been with the Magician amidst the caverns of the interior of the Earth.

solemn lustre—and the moon, clad in a fuller splendour than I had ever seen gathered round her melancholy orb, filled the cavern with a light, that was to the light of day what the life of an angel is to that of a mortal. Passionless, yet tender — steadfast — mystic — unwavering—she shone upon the glittering spars, and made a holiness of the very air; and in a long line, from the cavern to the verge of heaven, her sweet face breathed a measured and quiet joy into the rippling billows—" smiles of the sea."* A few thin and fleecy clouds alone varied the clear expanse of the heavens—and they rested, like the cars of spirits, far on the horizon.—And,

" Beautiful," said I, " is this outward world —your dim realms beneath have nothing to compare with it. There are no stars in the temples of the hidden earth—and one glimpse from the lovely moon is worth all the witchfires and meteors of the Giant palaces below."

" Thou lookest, young Mortal," said the Wizard in his mournful voice, " over my na-

* Æschylus' *Prometheus*.

tive shore. Beside that sea stood my ancestral halls—and beneath that moon first swelled within my bosom the deep tides of human emotion—and in this cavern, whence we now look forth on the seas and heavens, my youth passed some of its earnest hours in contemplations of that high and starred order which your lessened race—clogged with the mire of ages—never know: For that epoch was far remote in those ages which even tradition scarcely pierces. Your first fathers—what of their knowledge know ye?—what of their secrets have ye retained? their vast and dark minds were never fathomed by the plummet of your researches. The waves of the Black Night have swept over the Antient World—and all that you can guess of its buried glories are from the shivered fragments that ever and anon Chance casts upon the shores of the modern race."

"Do we sink, then," said I, "by comparison with the men of those distant times? Is not our lore deeper and more certain?—Was not their knowledge the offspring of a confused and

labouring conjecture?—Did they not live among dreams and shadows, and make Truth itself the creature of a fertile Imagination?"

"Nay," replied the shrouded and uncertain form beside me—"their knowledge pierced into the heart of things. They consulted the stars—but it was to measure the dooms of earth;—and could we raise from the dust their perished scrolls, you would behold the mirror of the living times. Their prophecies—(wrung from the toil and rapture of those powers which ye suffer to sleep, quenched, within the soul)—traversed the wilds of ages, and pointed out among savage hordes the cities and laws of empires yet to be. Ten thousand arts have mouldered from the earth—and Science is the shadow of what it was.—Young mortal, thou hast set thine heart upon Wisdom—thou hast wasted the fresh and radiant hours of opening life amidst the wearying thoughts of others:—thou hast laboured after Knowledge, and in that labour the healthful hues have for ever left thy cheek,

and age creeps upon the core while the dew is yet upon the leaf:—and for this labour—and in the transport and the vision that the soul's labour nurtures—thy spirit is now rapt from its fleshly career on earth,—wandering at will amongst the dread chasms and mines wombed within the world,—breathing a vital air amongst the dead,—comraded by Spirits, and the Powers that are not of flesh,—and catching, by imperfect glimpse and shadowy type, some knowledge of the arch mysteries of Creation;—and thou beholdest in me and in my science that which thy learning and thy fancy tracked not before. No legend ever chanced upon my strange and solemn being: nor does aught of my nature resemble the tales of Wizard or Sorcerer that the vulgar phantasies of Superstition have embodied. Thou hast journied over a land without a chart, and in which even Fable has hacknied not the Truth. Thou wouldst learn something of the Being thus permitted to thy wonder;—be it so. Under these sparkling arches—and be-

fore my ancestral sea—and beneath the listening ear of the halting Moon—thou shalt learn a history of the Antique World."

THE TALE OF KOSEM KESAMIM.

Along the shores which for thirty centuries no human foot has trod—and upon plains where now not one stone stands upon another, telling even of decay—was once the city and the empire of the Wise Kings—for so termed by their neighbours were the monarchs that ruled this country. Generation after generation they had toiled to earn and preserve that name. Amidst the gloom of mysterious temples, and the oracular learning of the star-read priests, the youth of each succeeding King was reared into a grave and brooding manhood.—Their whole lives were mystery. —Wrapt in the sepulchral grandeur of the Imperial palace—seen rarely—like gods—they sent forth, as from a cloud, the light of their dread but benign laws:—the courses of their life were tracked not—but they were believed to

possess the power over the seasons and elements —and to summon, at their will, the large-winged spirits, that walk to and fro across the earth, governing, like dreams, with a vague and unpenetrated power, the destinies of nations and the ambition of kings.

There was born to this imperial race a son, to whom seer and king alike foretold a strange and preternatural destiny. His childhood itself was of a silent, stern, and contemplative nature. And his learning, even in his boyish youth, had ransacked all that the grey priests could teach him.

But the passions are interwoven deeply with the elements of thought. And real wisdom is only gained by the process of fierce emotion.— Amidst all the pursuits of his aspiring mind, the heart of the young prince burned with a thousand passions untold and unregulated.

The Magician paused for a moment, and then, in a voice far different from the cold and solemn tone in which his accents were usually clothed, he broke forth :—



"O, beautiful, beyond the beauty of these sicklied and hoary times, was the beauty of Woman in the young world!—The glory of Eden had not yet departed from her face, and the lustre of unwearied Nature glowed alike upon Earth and Earth's majestic daughters. Beauty is youth's idol—and in the breast of Gondorah, for so was the Prince popularly called, (his higher and mystic titles may not be revealed,) the great passion—the great yearning—the great desire—was for the Lovely and the August—whatever their shape or mould. Not in woman only, but in all things, the Beautiful made his worship—wherever he beheld it, the image of the Deity was glassed on his adoring soul. But to him—or rather to *myself*—(if memory retain identity through the shift and lapse of worlds; making *me*, the same as one who, utterly dissimilar, lived a man amongst men, long ages back)—to me, there was yet a fiercer and more absorbing passion than love, or the idolatry of Nature—THE DESIRE TO KNOW!—My mind launched itself into the depth of Things—I

loved step after step to trace Effect to its first Cause. Reason was a chain from heaven to earth, and every link led me to aspire to the stars themselves. And the wisdom of my wise fathers was mine; I knew the secret of the elements, and could charm them into slumber, or arouse them to war. The mysteries of that dread Chemistry which is now among the Sciences that sleep—by which we can command the air and walk on its viewless paths—by which we can wake the thunder—and summon the cloud—and rive the earth;—the exercise of that high faculty—the Imagining Power—by which Fancy itself *creates* what it *wills*, and which, trained and exercised, can wake the spectres of the dead—and bring visible to the carnal eye the Genii that walk the world;—the watchful, straining, sleepless science, that can make a Sage's volume of the stars;—these were mine, and yet I murmured—I repined!—what higher mysteries were yet left to learn! The acquisition of to-day was but the disappointment of the morrow, and the dispensation of my ambition—was—to *desire!*

It was evening, and I went from the groves of the sacred Temple, to visit one whom I loved. The way spread over black and rugged masses of rock, amidst which, the wild shrub and dark weed sprung rife and verdant; for the waste as yet was eloquent of some great revulsion of the soil in the earlier epochs of the World—when Change often trod the heels of Change; and the Earth was scarcely reconciled to the sameness of her calm career. And I stood beneath the tree where SHE was to meet me—and my heart leapt within me as I saw her footsteps bounding along—and she came with her sweet lips breathing the welcome of human love, and I laid my head on her bosom and was content.

And, "Oh," said she, "art thou not proud of thy dawning fame? The Seers speak of thee with wonder, and the Priests bow their heads before thy name."

Then the passion of my soul broke forth, and I answered,—"What is this petty power that I possess, and what this barren knowledge? The

Great Arch Secret of all, I have toiled night after night to conquer, and I cannot attain it. What is it to command even the dark Spirits at war with Heaven—if we know not the nature of what we command? What I desire is not knowledge, but *the source* of knowledge. I wish that my eye should penetrate at once into the germ and cause of things: that when I look upon the outward beauty of the world, my sight should pierce within, and see the mechanism that causes and generates the beauty working beneath. Enough of my art have I learned to know that there is a film over human eyes which prevents their penetrating beyond the surface; it is to remove that film, and dart into the essence, and survey the One Great Productive Spirit of all Things, that I labour and yearn in vain. All other knowledge is a cheat; this is the high prerogative which mocks at conjecture and equals us with a God!"

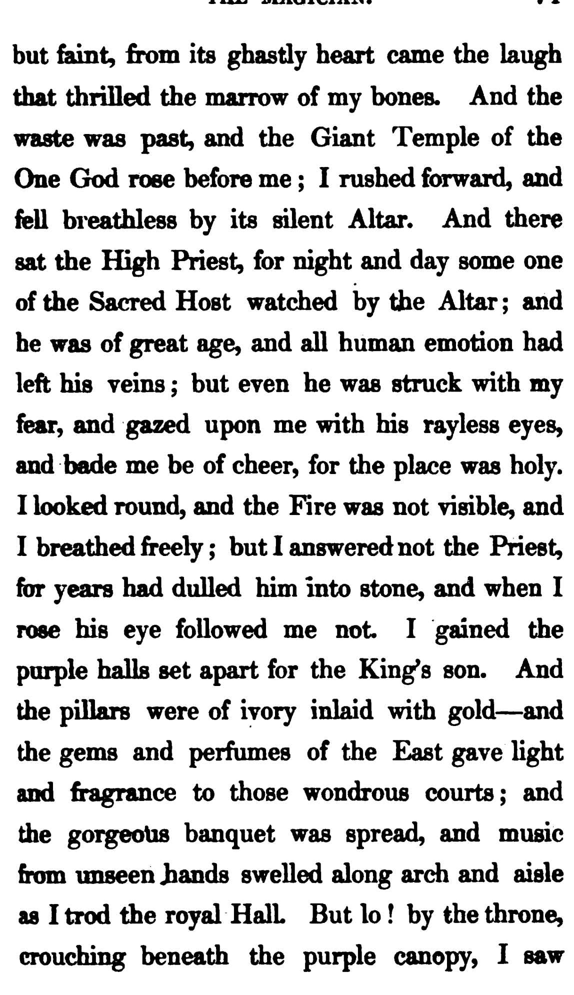
Then Lyciah saw that I was moved, and she kissed me, and sung me the sweet songs, that steeped my heart, as it were, in a bath of fragrant herbs.

Midnight had crept over the earth as I returned homeward across that savage scene. Rock heaped on rock bordered and broke upon the lonely valley that I crossed—and the moon was still, and shining, as at this hour, when its life is four thousand years nearer to its doom. Then suddenly I saw moving before me, with a tremulous motion, a meteoric Fire of an exceeding brightness. Ever as it moved above the seared and sterile soil, it soared and darted restlessly to and fro;—and I thought, as it danced and quivered, that I heard it laugh from its burning centre with a wild and frantic joy. I fancied, as I gazed upon the Fire, that in that shape revelled one of the children of the Elementary Genii; and, addressing it in their language, I bade it assume a palpable form. But the Fire darted on unheedingly, save that now the laugh from amidst the flame came all distinct and fearfully on my ear. Then my hair stood erect—and my veins curdled—and my knees knocked together;—I was under the influence of an Awe; for I felt that the Power

was not of the world—nor of that which my ancestral knowledge of the Powers of other worlds had yet pierced. My voice faltered, and thrice I strove to speak to the Light—but in vain; and when at length I addressed it in the solemn adjuration by which the sternest of the Fiends are bound, the Fire sprang up from the soil—towering aloof and aloft—with a livid but glorious lustre, bathing the whole atmosphere in its glare,—quenching, with an intenser ray, the splendours of the Moon,—and losing its giant crest in the Far Invisible of Heaven!

And a voice came forth, saying—"Thou callest upon inferior Spirits; I am that which thou hast pined to behold—I am 'The Living Principle of the World!'"

I bowed my face, and covered it with my hands, and my voice left me; and when again I looked round, behold, the Fire had shrunk from its momentary height, and was (now dwarfed and humble) creeping before me in its wavering and snake-like course. But fear was on me, and I fled, and fast fled the Fire by my side; and oft,



but faint, from its ghastly heart came the laugh that thrilled the marrow of my bones. And the waste was past, and the Giant Temple of the One God rose before me; I rushed forward, and fell breathless by its silent Altar. And there sat the High Priest, for night and day some one of the Sacred Host watched by the Altar; and he was of great age, and all human emotion had left his veins; but even he was struck with my fear, and gazed upon me with his rayless eyes, and bade me be of cheer, for the place was holy. I looked round, and the Fire was not visible, and I breathed freely; but I answered not the Priest, for years had dulled him into stone, and when I rose his eye followed me not. I gained the purple halls set apart for the King's son. And the pillars were of ivory inlaid with gold—and the gems and perfumes of the East gave light and fragrance to those wondrous courts; and the gorgeous banquet was spread, and music from unseen hands swelled along arch and aisle as I trod the royal Hall. But lo! by the throne, crouching beneath the purple canopy, I saw

the laughing Fire—and it seemed, lowly and paled, to implore protection. I paused, and took the courtiers aside, and asked them to mark the flame; but they saw it not—it burnt to mine eye alone. Then knew I that it was indeed a Spirit of that high race, which, even when they take visible form, are not visible save to the students of the Dread Science! And I trembled but revered.

And the Fire stayed by me night and day, and I grew accustomed to its light. But never, by charm or spell, could I draw further word from it; and it followed my steps with a silent and patient homage. And by degrees a vain and proud delight came over me, to think that I was so honoured; and I looked upon the pale and changeful face of the Fire as the face of a friend.

There was a man who had told years beyond the memory of the living—a renowned and famous seer—to whom, in times of dread and omen, our Priests and Monarchs themselves repaired for warning and advice. I sought his

abode. The seer was not of our race—he came from the distant waters of the Nile, and the dark mysteries of Egypt had girded his youth. It was in the cavern itself in which, young stranger of the North, this tale is now poured into thy ear, that the Seer held his glittering home—for lamp upon lamp then lighted up, from an unfailing naphtha, these dazzling spars —and the seamen of the vessels that crowded yonder bay beheld, far down the blue waters, the nightly blaze flickering along the wave, and reminding the reverent mariner of many an awful legend of the Cavern Home. And hither had often turned my young feet in my first boyhood, and from the shrivelled lip of the old Egyptian had much of my loftiest learning been gleaned; for he loved me—and seeing with a prophet eye far down the great depths of Time, he knew that I was fated to wild and fearful destinies, and a life surpassing the period of his own.

It was on that night, when the New Moon scatters its rank and noxious influence over the

foliage and life of earth, that I sought the Egyptian. The Fire burned with a fiercer and redder light than its wont, as it played and darted by my side. And when, winding by the silver sands, I passed into the entrance of the Cave, I saw the old man sitting on a stone. As I entered, the Seer started from his seat in fear and terror—his eyes rolled—his thin grey hairs stood erect—a cold sweat broke from his brow—and the dread master stood before his pupil in agony and awe.

"Thou comest," muttered he with white lips; "What is by thy side? hast thou dared to seek knowledge with the Soul of all Horror—with the ghastly Leper of —— Avaunt! bid the fiend begone!"

His voice seemed to leave the old man, and with a shriek he fell upon his face on the ground.

"Is it," said I, appalled by his terror—"is it the Fire that haunts my steps at which thou tremblest? behold, it is harmless as a dog; it burns not while it shines; if a fiend, it is a merry

fiend, for I hear it laugh while I speak. But it is for this, Dread Sire, that I have sought thee. Canst thou tell me the nature of the Spirit—for a Spirit it surely is? Canst thou tell me its end and aim?"

I lifted the old man from the earth—and his kingly heart returned to him—and he took the Wizard Crown from the wall, and he placed it on his brows—for he was as a Monarch among the Things that are not of clay. And he said to the Fire—"Approach!" And the Fire glided to his knees. And he said, "Art thou the Spirit of the Element, and was thy cradle in the Flint's heart?"

And a voice from the flame answered "No."

And again the Egyptian trembled.

"What art thou, then?" said he.

And the Fire answered, "Thy Lord."

And the limbs of the Egyptian shook as with the grasp of death.

And he said, "Art thou a Demon of *this* world?"

And the Fire answered, "I am the Life of this world—and I am *not* of other worlds."

"I know thee—I fear thee—I acknowledge thee!" said the Egyptian, "and in thy soft lap shall this crowned head soon be laid."

And the Fire laughed.

'But tell me," said I,—for though my blood stood still my soul was brave and stern—"Tell me, O Sire, what hath this Thing with me?"

"It is the Great Ancestor of us all!" said the Egyptian, groaning.

"And knows it the Secrets of the Past?"

"The Secrets of the Past are locked within it."

"Can it teach me that which I pine to know? —Can it teach me the essence of things—the nature of all I see?—Can it raise the film from my human eyes?"

"Rash Prince, be hushed!" cried the Egyptian, rising, and glaring upon me with his stony eye—"Seek not to know that which will curse thee with the knowledge. Ask not a power

that would turn life into a living grave. All the lore that man ever knew is mine; but *that* secret have I shunned, and *that* power have I cast from me, as the shepherd casts the viper from his hand. Be still—be moderate—be wise. And bid me exorcise the Spirit that accosts thee from the Fire!"

"Can it teach me the arch mystery? When I gaze upon the herb or flower, can it gift my gaze with the power to pierce into the cause and workings of its life?"

"I can teach thee this," said the Fire; and it rose higher, and burned fiercer, as it spake, till the lamps of naphtha paled before it.

"Then abide by me, O Spirit," said I; "and let us not be severed."

"Miserable boy," cried the Egyptian; "was this, then, the strange and preternatural doom which my Art foresaw was to be thine, though it deciphered not its nature? Knowest thou that this Fire so clear—so pure—so beautiful—is——"

"Beware!" cried the voice from the Fire;

and the crest of the flame rose, as the crest of a serpent about to spring upon its prey.

"Thou awest me not," said the Egyptian, though the blood fled from his shrivelled and tawny cheeks. "Thou art——"

"The Living Principle of the World," interrupted the voice.

"And thine other name?" cried the Egyptian.

"Thy Conqueror!" answered the voice; and straight, as the answer went forth, the Egyptian fell, blasted as by lightning, a corpse at my feet. The light of the Fire played with a blue and tremulous lustre upon the carcass, and presently I beheld by that light that the corpse was already passed into the loathsomeness of decay—the flesh was rotting from the bones—and the worm and the creeping thing, that the rottenness generates, twined in the very jaws and temples of the Sage.

I sickened and gasped for breath—"Is this thy work, oh Fearful Fiend!" said I, shuddering. And the Fire, passing from the corpse, crept

humbly at my feet—and its voice answered—
"Whatever my power, it is thy slave!"

"Was that death thy work?" repeated my quivering lips.

"Thou knowest," answered the Fire, "that Death is not the will of any Power—save one. The death came from His will—and I but exulted over the blow!"

I left the cavern; my art, subtle as it was, gave me no glimpse into the causes of the Egyptian's death. I looked upon the Fire, as it crept along the herbage, with an inquisitive, yet dreading eye. I felt an awe of the Demon's power; and yet the proud transport I had known in the subjection of that power was increased, and I walked with a lofty step at the thought that I should have so magnificent a slave. But the words of the mysterious Egyptian still rang in my ear—still I shuddered and recoiled before his denunciation of the power and the secret I desired. And the voice of the Fire now addressed me (as I passed along the starry solitude) with a persuasive and sweet tone.

“ Shrink not, young Sage,” it said, or rather sang, “ from a power beyond that of which thy wisest ancestors ever dreamed—lose not thy valour at the drivelling whispers of age—when did ever age approve what youth desires? Thou art formed for the destiny which belongs to royal hearts—the destiny courts thee. Why dost thou play the laggard?”

“ Knowledge,” said I, musingly, “ can never be productive of woe. If it be knowledge thou canst give me, I will not shrink. Lo! I accept thy gift!”

The Fire played cheerily to and fro. And from the midst of it there stepped forth a pale and shadowy form, of female shape and of exceeding beauty; her face was indeed of no living wanness, and the limbs were indistinct, and no roundness swelled from their vapoury robes; but the features were lovely as a dream, and long yellow hair—glowing as sunlight—fell adown her neck. “Thou wouldst pierce,” said she, “ to the Principle of the World. Thou wouldst that thine eye should penetrate into my fair and most mys-

tic dominion. But not yet; there is an ordeal to pass. To the Whole Knowledge thou must glide through the Imperfect!" Then the female kissed my eyes, and vanished, and with it vanished also the Fire.

Oh, beautiful!—Oh, wondrous!—Oh, divine! A scale had fallen from my sight—and a marvellous glory was called forth upon the face of earth. I saw millions and millions of spirits shooting to and fro athwart the air—spirits that my magic had yet never descried—spirits of rainbow hues, and quivering with the joy that made their nature. Wherever I cast my gaze, life upon life was visible. Every blade of grass swarmed with myriads invisible to the common eye—but performing with mimic regularity all the courses of the human race; every grain of dust, every drop of water, was a universe—mapped into a thousand tribes, all fulfilling the great destinies of Mortality;—Love—Fear—Hope—Emulation—Avarice—Jealousy—War—Death. My eyes had been touched with a glorious charm. And even in that, which to the casual

eye would have been a mute, and solitary, and breathless hour, I was suddenly summoned into a dazzling atmosphere of life—every atom a world. And, bending my eyes below, I saw emerging from the tiny hollows of the earth, those fantastic and elfin shapes that have been chiefly consecrated by your Northern Bards; forth they came merrily, merrily—dancing in the smooth sheen of the silent heavens, and chasing the swift-winged creatures, that scarcely the glass of science can give to the eye. If all around was life, it was the life of enchantment and harmony—a subtle, pervading element of delight. Speech left me for very joy, and I gazed, thrilled and breathless, around me—entered, as it were, into the Inner Temples of the Great System of the Universe.

I looked round for the Fire—it was gone. I was alone amidst this new and populous creation, and I stretched myself voluptuously beneath a tree, to sate my soul with wonder. As a Poet in the height of his delirium was my rapture—my veins were filled with Poesy, which is

Intoxication—and my eyes had been touched with Poesy, which is the Creative Power—and the miracles before me were Poesy, which is the Enchanter's Wand.

Days passed, and the bright Demon which had so gifted me appeared not, nor yet did the spell cease; but every hour, every moment, new marvels rose. I could not walk—I could not touch stone or herb, without coming into a new realm utterly different from those I had yet seen, but equally filled with life—so that there was never a want of novelty; and had I been doomed to pass my whole existence upon three feet of earth, I might have spent that existence in perpetual variety—in unsatisfied and eternally new research. But most of all, when I sought Lyciah I felt the full gift I possessed; for in conversing with her my sense penetrated to her heart, and I felt, as with a magnetic sympathy, moving through its transparent purity, the thoughts and emotions that were all my own.

By degrees I longed indeed to make her a

sharer in my discovered realms; for I now slowly began to feel the weariness of a conqueror who reigns alone—none to share my power or partake the magnificence in which I dwelt.

One day, even in the midst of angelic things that floated blissfully round me—so that I heard the low melodies they hymned as they wheeled aloft—one day this pining, this sense of solitude in life—of satiety in glory—came on me. And I said, "But this is the imperfect state; why not enjoy the whole? Could I ascend to that high and empyreal Knowledge, to which this is but a step, doubtless this dissatisfied sentiment would vanish; discontent arises because there is something still to attain; attain all, and discontent must cease. Bright Spirit," cried I aloud, "to whom I already owe so great a benefit, come to me now—why hast thou left me? Come and complete thy gifts. I see yet only the wonders of the secret portions of the world—touch mine eyes that I may see *the cause* of the wonders. I am surrounded with an air of life;

let me pierce into the principle of that life. Bright Spirit, minister to thy servant!" Then I heard the sweet voice that had spoken in the Fire—but I saw not the Fire itself. And the voice said unto me—

"Son of the Wise Kings, I am here!"

"I see thee not," said I. "Why hidest thou thy lustre?"

"Thou seest the Half, and that very sight blinds thee to the Whole. This redundance and flow of life gushes from me as from its source. When the mid-course of the River is seen, who sees also its distant spring? In thee, not myself, is the cause that thou beholdest me not. I am as I was when I bowed my crest to thy feet; but thine eyes are not what then they were!"

"Thou tellest me strange things, O Demon!" said I; "for why, when admitted to a clearer sight of things, should my eyes be darkened alone when they turn to thee?"

"Does not all knowledge, save the one right knowledge, only lead men from the discovery of

the Primal Causes. As Imagination may soar aloft, and find new worlds, yet lose the solid truth —so thou mayest rise into the regions of a preternatural lore, yet recede darklier and darklier from the clue to Nature herself."

I mused over the words of the Spirit, but their sense seemed dim.

"Canst thou not appear to me in thine old, wan, and undulating brightness?" said I, after a pause.

"Not until thine eyes receive power to behold me."

"And when may I be worthy that power?"

"When thou art thoroughly dissatisfied with thy present gifts."

"Dread Demon, I am so now!"

"Wilt thou pass from this pleasant state at a hazard — not knowing that which may ensue? Behold, all around thee is full of glory, and musical with joy! Wilt thou abandon that state for a dark and perilous Unknown?"

"The Unknown is the passion of him who aspires to know."

"Pause; for it is a dread alternative," said the Invisible.

"My heart beats steadily.—Come,—mine be the penalty of the desire!"

"Thy wish is granted," said the Spirit.

Then straightway a pang, quick, sharp, agonizing, shot through my heart. I felt the stream in my veins stand still, hardening into a congealed substance—my throat rattled, I struggled against the grasp of some iron power.—A terrible sense of my own impotence seized me—my muscles refused my will, my voice fled—I was in the possession of some authority that had entered, and claimed, and usurped the citadel of my own self. Then came a creeping of the flesh, a deadly sensation of ice and utter coldness; and lastly, a blackness, deep and solid as a mass of rock, fell over the whole earth—I had entered DEATH!

From this state I was roused by the voice of the Demon. "Awake, look forth!—Thou hast thy desire!—Abide the penalty!" The darkness broke from the earth; the ice thawed from

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the sickly, loathsome glare that steamed from the universal Death in Life. The tiniest thing that moved—you beheld the decay moving through its veins, and its corruption, unconscious to itself, engendered new tribes of life! The World was one dead carcass, from which every thing the World bore took its being. There was not such a thing as beauty!—there was not such a thing as life that did not generate from its own corruption a loathsome life for others! I looked down upon myself, and saw that my very veins swarmed with a motelike creation of shapes, springing into hideous existence from mine own disease, and mocking the Human Destiny with the same career of love, life, and death. Methought it must be a spell, that change of scene would change. I shut my eyes with a frantic horror, and I fled, fast, fast, but blinded; and ever as I fled a laugh rang in my ears, and I stopped not till I was at the feet of Lyciah, for she was my first involuntary thought. Whenever a care or fear possessed me, I had been wont to fly to her bosom, and charm

my heart by the magic of her sweet voice. I was at the feet of Lyciah—I clasped her knees—I looked up imploringly into her face—God of my Fathers! the same curse attended me still! Her beauty was gone. There was no whole,—no one life in that Being whom I had so adored. Her life was composed of a million lives. Her stately shape, of atoms crumbling from each other, and so bringing about the ghastly state of corruption which reigned in all else around.—Her delicate hues, her raven hair, her fragrant lips—Pah!—What, what was my agony!—I turned from her again,—I shrank in loathing from her embrace,—I fled once more,—on—on. I ascended a mountain, and looked down on the various leprosies of Earth. Sternly I forced myself to the task; sternly I inhaled the knowledge I had sought; sternly I drank in the horrible penalty I had dared.

"Demon," I cried, "appear, and receive my curse!"

"Lo, I am by thy side evermore," said the voice. Then I gazed, and, behold, the Fire was

by my side; and I saw that it was the livid light that the jaws of Rottenness emits; and in the midst of the light, which was as its shroud and garment, stood a Giant shape—that was the shape of a Corpse that had been for months buried. I gazed upon the Demon with an appalled yet unquailing eye, and, as I gazed, I recognized in those ghastly lineaments a resemblance to the Female Spirit that had granted me the first fatal gift. But exaggerated, enlarged, dead,—Beauty rotted into Horror.

"I am that which thou didst ask to see face to face.—I am the Principle of Life."

"Of Life! Out, horrible mocker!—hast thou no other name?"

"I have! and the other name is—CORRUPTION!"

"Bright Lamps of Heaven," I cried, lifting my eyes in anguish from the loathly Charnel of the Universal Earth; "and is this, which men call 'Nature,'—is this the sole Principle of the World?"

As I spoke, the huge carcass beneath my feet

trembled.—And over the face of the corpse beside me there fell a fear.—And lo! the Heavens were lit up with a pure and glorious light, and from the midst of them there came forth A Voice, which rolled slowly over the face of the charnel earth as the voice of thunder above the valley of the shepherd. "SUCH," said the Voice, "IS NATURE, IF THOU ACCEPTEST NATURE AS THE FIRST CAUSE—SUCH IS THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT A GOD!"

ON THE

PASSION FOR THE UNIVERSAL.

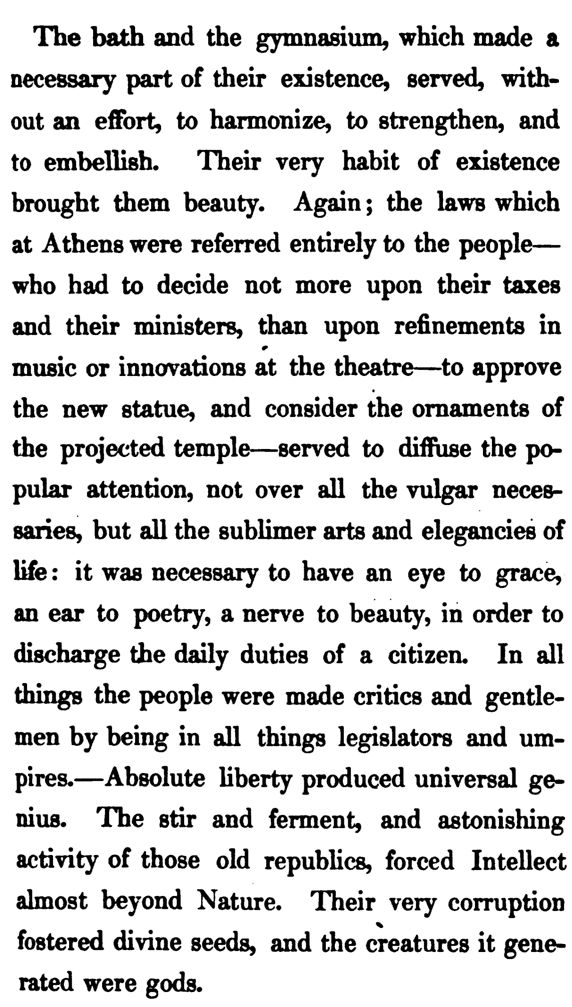


ON THE

PASSION FOR THE UNIVERSAL.

When I was a younger man than I am now, I was smitten by that ambition for the Universal, not uncommon perhaps in versatile and lively imaginations, which easily master whatever they attempt, and which find therefore labour only a triumph to their self-esteem. I held it as a doctrine, that the mind in its utmost perfection must not be utterly ignorant of any species of human knowledge or accomplishment within its reach, and that the body being a part of us, and that part most prominent and visible, had also a legitimate right to its careful education, for we are

not all soul. The frame should indeed be the servant of the mind—but neglect or scorn the slave too much, and he rebels, and may become the tyrant in his turn. The notion of this all-accomplishment, mental and corporeal, is an old one—it is one upon which the character of the Ancient Nations, and of Athens especially, was formed. Alcibiades and Pericles were but incarnations of the genius of their country. But, in truth, the task of circling the round of knowledge was more practicable two thousand years ago than it is now: books were few, speculations contracted, learning flowed with a mighty stream —but not from numerous sources. All the fruits of the Divine Tree were near at hand to the wanderer, and not scattered as they are at present, in myriad grafts, over the surface of the globe. If this was their advantage in the mental, so in the corporeal education, the life which the ancients led—their habits and their customs so entirely dissimilar from the indolent apathy of modern times, were well suited to perfect all the faculties, and to gift with all the graces.



The bath and the gymnasium, which made a necessary part of their existence, served, without an effort, to harmonize, to strengthen, and to embellish. Their very habit of existence brought them beauty. Again; the laws which at Athens were referred entirely to the people—who had to decide not more upon their taxes and their ministers, than upon refinements in music or innovations at the theatre—to approve the new statue, and consider the ornaments of the projected temple—served to diffuse the popular attention, not over all the vulgar necessaries, but all the sublimer arts and elegancies of life: it was necessary to have an eye to grace, an ear to poetry, a nerve to beauty, in order to discharge the daily duties of a citizen. In all things the people were made critics and gentlemen by being in all things legislators and umpires.—Absolute liberty produced universal genius. The stir and ferment, and astonishing activity of those old republics, forced Intellect almost beyond Nature. Their very corruption fostered divine seeds, and the creatures it generated were gods.

These causes combined gave to our ancient models that character of "the all-accomplished," which the moderns, under different circumstances of society, can never but imperfectly attain.

The division of labour has become necessary to a vast and complex order of civilization, and, no longer living in petty cities, but overpopulated nations, one man cannot hope successfully to unite the poet, the soldier, the philosopher, the artist, the critic;—the oracle of one sex, and the idol of the other.* The true character of the Universal has passed away for ever. It is fortunate for us that the world, somewhat early and somewhat roughly, rouses us from this ambition, too excursive for common purposes, if pursued too long—and, that, settled betimes to the pursuit of one career, or to the mastery of one art, we accustom ourselves not to chase the golden apples which lure us from our goal.

* Prior says elegantly enough to Lord Bolingbroke, who, of all modern public men, approached the nearest to the character of the Alcibiades,—" Men respect you, and women love you."

Yet for a short time, at least, this passion has its uses which last throughout our lives: without aiming in youth at the acquisition of many things, we should scarcely in manhood attain perfection in one. Insensibly, through a wide and desultory range, we gather together the vast hoard of thoughts, and images—of practical illustrations of life—of comparisons of the multiform aspects of Truth, whether in men or books, which are the aids and corroborants and embellishments of the single and sole pursuit to which we finally attach ourselves.

We are thus in no danger of becoming the machines of the closet—or the feasters upon one idea. Each individual research into which we have entered may not have been carried to a sufficient depth to open a separate mine. But the broad surface we have ploughed up yields us an abundant harvest. To an active mind it is astonishing what use may be made of every the pettiest acquisition. Gibbon tells us with solemn complacency of the assistance he derived to his immortal work—the sieges and the

strategy it expounds—from having served in the Militia! A much wider use of accomplishment is to be found in the instance of Milton:—what a wonderful copiousness of all knowledge, seemingly the most motley, the most incongruous, he has poured into his great poem! Perhaps there is no mighty river of genius which is not fed by a thousand tributary streams. Milton is indeed an august example of the aspiration to the Universal. This severe republican, who has come down to the vulgar gaze in colours so stern though so sublime—had in his early tendencies all that most distinguishes our ideal of the knight and cavalier. No man in these later days was ever by soul and nature so entirely the all-accomplished and consummate gentleman. Beautiful in person—courtly in address—skilled in the gallant exercise of arms—a master of each manlier as each softer art—versed in music—in song—in the languages of Europe—the admired gallant of the dames and nobles of Italy—the cynosure of all eyes "that rained influence and adjudged"—he, the destined

Dante of England, was the concentration of our dreams of the Troubadour—and the reality of the imaginary Crichton. In his later life we find the haughty patriot recurring, with a patrician pride, to all the accomplishments he had mastered—the sword as well as lute; and if we could furnish forth the outline of the education he prescribes as necessary to others, we should have no reason to complain that the versatility and the range of Athenian genius had passed away.*

* In his letter to Master Samuel Hartlib, Milton does indeed startle even the most ambitious of modern scholars. After declaring, in his own stately manner, that he calls "a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, *all (!)* the offices of peace and *war (!)*" he proceeds to chalk out a general outline of rational studies for young gentlemen between twelve and twenty-one:—Grammar, arithmetic, agriculture, natural history, geometry, astronomy, geography, fortification, architecture, engineering, navigation, history of meteors, minerals, plants, and living creatures, as far as anatomy, and the art of medicine. All this to be assisted by the "helpful experiences of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries, architects, engineers, miners, anatomists." And the

Yet this Greek yearning after all lore, not only that instructs, but embellishes, invariably exposes us, with the vulgar, to two charges—superficiality and frivolity—the last accusations which we are likely to deserve. *Perhaps no men are more superficial in their views than*

above, by-the-by, before the tyro enters the "rural part of Virgil!" Then come ethics, theology, politics, law, as delivered first by Moses, and, "as far as human prudence can be trusted, Lycurgus, Solon, Zaleucus, Charondas," and thence "to *all* the Roman edicts and tables, with their Justinian, and *so down to the Saxon and common* laws of England, and the statutes." Join to this French, Italian, Latin, Greek, Hebrew; "whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect." Thus accomplished, the pupils are to be made poets, authors, orators; and, instead of cricket, in play-hours, they are "to serve out the rudiments of soldiership, in all the skill of embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging, and battering;" besides trips after the first two or three years; [after which Milton gravely declares he would not be *much* for their studying (!)]— to our navy to learn the practical knowledge of sailing and sea-fight. If all this would not make universal scholars, it would certainly make the most universal little dunces.

those who cultivate one branch of learning, and only one branch;—perhaps no men are less superficial than those who know the outlines of many. A man, indeed, who in letters or statesmanship, cultivates *only* one pursuit, can rarely master it thoroughly. It is by eternal comparisons of truth with truth, that we come to just and profound conclusions; the wider the range of comparisons, the more accurate our inferences. There is an experience of the intellect as well as of the observation, which never can be well attained by exclusive predilections and confined circles.

We find, therefore, in all the deepest masters of the human heart, or of the human mind, an amazingly searching and miscellaneous appetite for knowledge of all sorts, small or great. The statesman who wrote the "Prince," wrote also comedies and a novel—a treatise on the military Art—and poetry without end. Goëthe was a botanist as well as a poet and a philosopher. Shakspeare seems, by the profuse allusions, "enamelling with pied flowers his thoughts of

gold,"* to have diligently learnt all that his age permitted to one self-educated and not versed betimes in the ancient languages or the physical sciences—yet even of these latter he had taught himself something. You find in him metaphors borrowed from the mechanical arts of life. It was an universal smattering which helped him to be profound. No less universal, no less accomplished, was Bacon, who may be called the Shakspeare of philosophy. With the same pen which demolished the Aristotelism of the schoolmen, he writes a treatise on the laws, a cure for the gout—the translation of a psalm, and an essay on plantations. The men who, on the contrary, are so careful to avoid the Superficial—who plummet only one source of learning, and think that, in order to penetrate to its depth, no time can be spared to sport over other fountains, are usually shallow and headstrong theorists. They go round and round in a narrow circle, and never discover the outlet. Such a man was that pedant mentioned by Boyle, who

* Sir P. Sidney.

had devoted his whole life to the study of a single mineral, and who owned he had not ascertained a hundredth part of its properties. These men are not only superficial, they are the truly frivolous—they grow so wedded to their one pursuit, that its pettiest and most insignificant details have a grandeur in their eyes. They are for ever poring over the animalculæ on the one leaf of the Eden tree: they cannot see things that are large—they are spending their lives in the midst of the prodigal world in considering the hundredth part of the properties of a mineral!

Vulgar minds often mistake for frivolities what are but the indications of a certain refinement which pervades the whole character, and leaves its stamp upon small things as on great. Most remarkable men have one predominant passion of the intellect strongly developed, which pursues its object into minutiæ. Thus with Goëthe, that singular affection for order or harmony which made him the greatest literary *artist* that ever lived, displayed itself in the

neatness of his hand-writing—in his care of the nice arrangement of his furniture and papers—in his hatred to see even a blot of ink upon a manuscript. All this regard to trifles was not frivolity—it was a trait of character—it belonged to the artist: without it he would not have had the habit of mind which made him what he was. We may detect the same traits in a smaller degree in Pope. With him it was less the love of order than of neatness—(a *part* of order.) In most poets the strongest intellectual passion is the love of beauty: and this often displays itself in the elegance of domestic detail. * * * * * fastidious in the flow of a curtain, is not frivolous—he but manifests the same taste which gives him his acumen in works of art, and polishes to an excess of smoothness the ivory mechanism of his verse.

But this love of beauty in all its aspects is strongest in those whose early years have passed in the attempt to cultivate every faculty and excel in every pursuit. The students of the Universal acquire an almost intuitive instinct

into the fluent harmony of things. Their early ambition opens to them a thousand sources of enjoyment. Wherever there is excellence they feel all the rapture of admiration. A landscape, a picture, a statue, a gem, a fine horse, a palace, the possessions of others—if worthy to be admired—their sense of enjoyment makes their own, while they regard;—sympathy, for the moment, appropriates them, and becomes the substitute of envy.

We all flatter ourselves in our favourite tendencies, and, for my own part, I may deceive myself as to the nature of mine—but I consider that to love the Beautiful in all things, to surround ourselves, as far as our means permit, with all its evidences, not only elevates the thoughts and harmonizes the mind, but is a sort of homage that we owe to the gifts of God and the labours of man. The Beautiful is the Priest of the Benevolent.

Yet, the ambition of the Universal is neither safe nor prudent, unless we cultivate some one pursuit above all the rest, making the others only its ministrants or its reliefs. If we know a

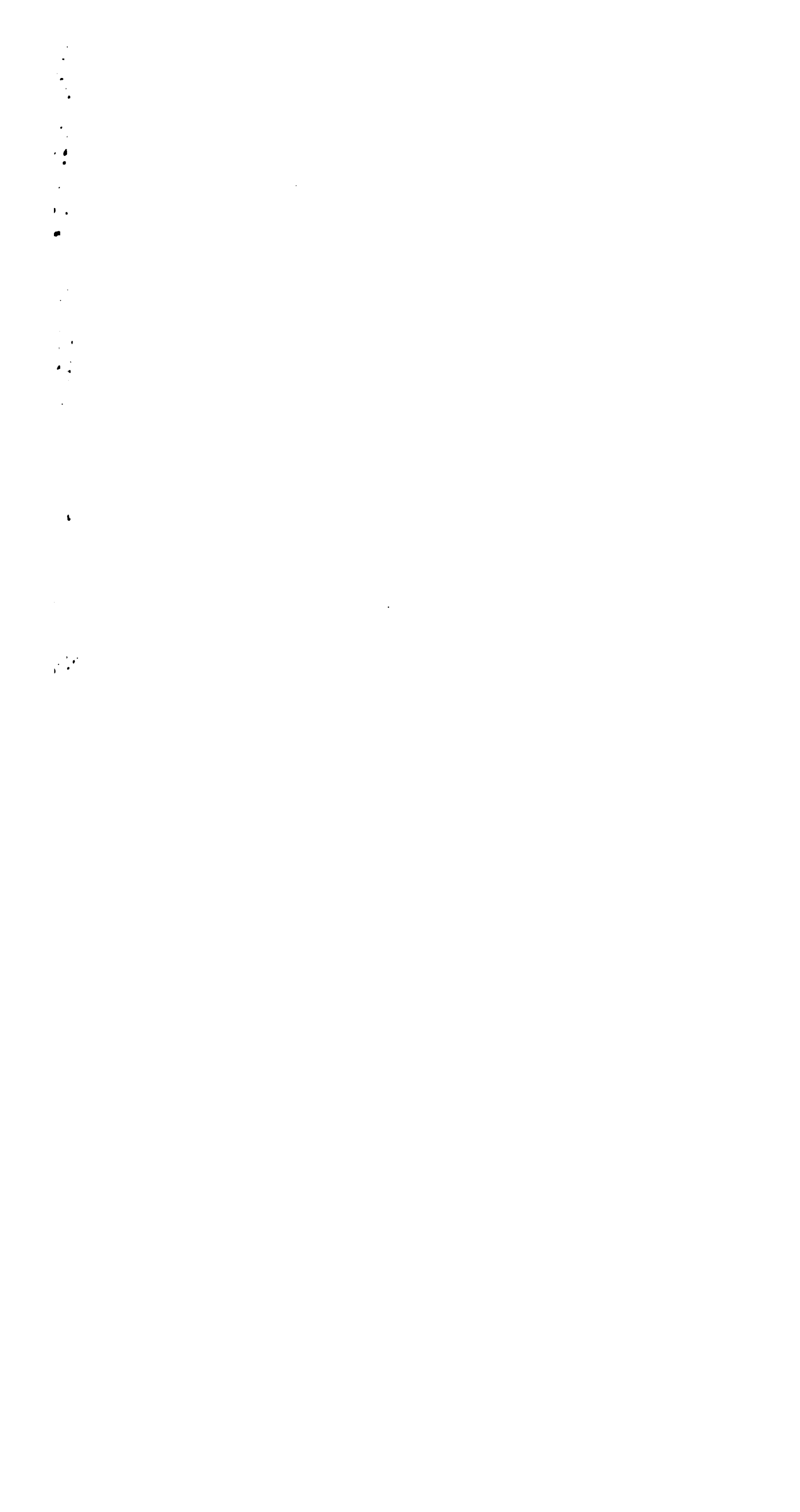
little of every thing, it will not do to write upon every thing—but choosing that career of imagination or of thought for which we feel ourselves most fitted, and making *this* our *main* object, all the rest that we know or enjoy, illustrates and enlarges the scope of our chief design. It was wise in Milton, or in Homer, to pour the choicest of their multiform lore into their poems; but they might have been justly termed superficial had they written separate essays upon each division of knowledge which they prove themselves to have cultivated. Far from complaining that life is too long, I honour the frankness of the old sage, who, living to a hundred, said his only regret was to die so soon. So vast is the mind of man, so various its faculties, so measureless the range of observation to feed and to elicit his powers, that if we had lived from the birth of the world till now, we could not have compassed a millionth part of that which our capacities, trained to the utmost, would enable us to grasp.—It requires an eternity to develope all the elements of the soul!



FERDINAND FITZROY,

OR

TOO HANDSOME FOR ANY THING.





FERDINAND FITZROY,

OR

TOO HANDSOME FOR ANY THING.

"My dear friend," said I, the other day, to a mother who was expressing her anxiety that her son should be as handsome as herself— "Believe me, that if beauty be a fatal gift for women, it is an inconvenient one to men.—A handsome face is very much against a young gentleman destined to the professions. An attorney takes an instinctive dislike to an Adonis of a barrister. What prudent man would like

Antinous for his family physician? The envy of our sex (much more jealous than yours) will not acknowledge wisdom unless it has a snub nose. When Apollo came to earth the highest employment he could obtain was that of a shepherd."

"Pooh," replied my fair friend—"Has it not been well said, that a handsome face is a letter of recommendation?"

"It is a Bellerophon letter, madam, and betrays while it recommends. Permit me to tell you the history of Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy."

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was one of those models of perfection of which a human father and mother can produce but a single example.—Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was therefore an only son. He was such an amazing favourite with both his parents that they resolved to ruin him; accordingly, he was exceedingly spoiled, never annoyed by the sight of a book, and had as much plum-cake as he could eat. Happy would it have been for Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy could he always have eaten plum-cake, and remained

a child. "Never," says the Greek Tragedian, "reckon a mortal happy till you have witnessed his end." A most beautiful creature was Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy! Such eyes—such hair—such teeth—such a figure—such manners, too,—and such an irresistible way of tying his neckcloth! When he was about sixteen, a crabbed old uncle represented to his parents the propriety of teaching Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy to read and write. Though not without some difficulty, he convinced them,—for he was exceedingly rich, and riches in an uncle are wonderful arguments respecting the nurture of a nephew whose parents have nothing to leave him. So our hero was sent to school. He was naturally a very sharp, clever boy; and he came on surprisingly in his learning. The schoolmaster's wife liked handsome children.—"What a genius will Master Ferdinand Fitzroy be, if you take pains with him!" said she, to her husband.

"Pooh, my dear, it is of no use to take pains with *him*."

"And why, love?"

"Because he is a great deal too handsome ever to be a scholar."

"That's true enough, my dear!" said the schoolmaster's wife.

So, because he was too handsome to be a scholar, Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy remained the lag of the fourth form!

They took our hero from school.—"What profession shall he follow?" said his mother.

"My first cousin is the Lord Chancellor," said his father, "let him go to the bar."

The Lord Chancellor dined there that day: Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was introduced to him; his Lordship was a little, rough-faced, beetle-browed, hard-featured man, who thought beauty and idleness the same thing—and a parchment skin the legitimate complexion for a lawyer.

"Send him to the bar!" said he, "no, no, that will never do!—Send him into the army; he is much too handsome to become a lawyer."

"That's true enough, my Lord!" said the mother. So they bought Mr. Ferdinand Fitz-

roy a cornetcy in the —— Regiment of Dragoons.

Things are not learned by inspiration. Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy had never ridden at school, except when he was hoisted; he was, therefore, a very indifferent horseman; they sent him to the riding-school, and everybody laughed at him.

"He is a d——d ass!" said Cornet Horsephiz, who was very ugly; "A horrid puppy!" said Lieutenant St. Squintem, who was still uglier; "If he does not ride better, he will disgrace the regiment!" said Captain Rivalhate, who was very good-looking; "If he does not ride better, we will cut him!" said Colonel Everdrill, who was a wonderful martinet; "I say, Mr. Bumpemwell, (to the riding-master,) make that youngster ride less like a miller's sack."

"Pooh, sir, *he* will never ride better."

"And why the d—l will he not?"

"Bless you, Colonel, he is a great deal too handsome for a cavalry officer!"

"True!" said Cornet Horsephiz.

"Very true!" said Lieutenant St. Squintem.

"We must cut him!" said the Colonel.

And Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was accordingly cut.

Our hero was a youth of susceptibility—he quitted the —— regiment, and challenged the Colonel. The Colonel was killed!

"What improper behaviour in Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy!" said the Colonel's relations.

"Very true!" said the world.

The parents were in despair!—They were not rich; but our hero was an only son, and they sponged hard upon the crabbed old uncle!

"He is very clever," said they both, "and may do yet."

So they borrowed some thousands from the uncle, and bought his beautiful nephew a seat in Parliament.

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was ambitious, and desirous of retrieving his character. He fagged like a dragon—conned pamphlets and reviews—got Ricardo by heart—and made notes on the English Constitution.

He rose to speak.

"What a handsome fellow!" whispered one member.

"Ah, a coxcomb!" said another.

"Never do for a speaker!" said a third, very audibly.

And the gentlemen on the opposite benches sneered and *heared!*—Impudence is only indigenous in Milesia, and an orator is not made in a day. Discouraged by his reception, Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy grew a little embarrassed.

"Told you so!" said one of his neighbours.

"Fairly broke down!" said another.

"Too fond of his hair to have any thing in his head," said a third, who was considered a wit.

"Hear, hear!" cried the gentlemen on the opposite benches.

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy sat down—he had not shone; but, in justice, he had not failed. Many a first-rate speaker had made a less flourishing commencement; and many a county member had been declared a phœnix of promise upon half his merit.

Not so, thought the heroes of corn laws.

"Your Adonises never make orators!" said a crack speaker with a wry nose.

"Nor men of business either," added the chairman of a committee, with a face like a kangaroo's.

"Poor devil!" said the civilest of the set. "He's a deuced deal too handsome for work! By Jove, he is going to speak again—this will never do; we must cough him down!"

And Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was accordingly coughed down.

Our hero was now seven or eight and twenty, handsomer than ever, and the admiration of all the young ladies at Almack's.

"We have nothing to leave you," said the parents, who had long spent their fortune, and now lived on the credit of having once enjoyed it.—"You are the handsomest man in London; you must marry an heiress."

"I will," said Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy.

Miss Helen Convolvulus was a charming young lady, with a hare-lip and six thousand a-

year. To Miss Helen Convolvulus then our hero paid his addresses.

Heavens! what an uproar her relations made about the matter. "Easy to see his intentions," said one: "a handsome fortune-hunter, who wants to make the best of his person!"—"handsome is that handsome does," says another; "he was turned out of the army, and murdered his Colonel;"—"never marry a beauty," said a third;—"he can admire none but himself;" "will have so many mistresses," said a fourth;—"make you perpetually jealous," said a fifth;—"spend your fortune," said a sixth; "and break your heart," said a seventh.

Miss Helen Convolvulus was prudent and wary. She saw a great deal of justice in what was said; and was sufficiently contented with liberty and six thousand a-year, not to be highly impatient for a husband; but our heroine had no aversion to a lover; especially to so handsome a lover as Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy. Accordingly she neither accepted nor discarded him; but kept him on hope, and suffered him

to get into debt with his tailor, and his coach-maker, on the strength of becoming Mr. Fitzroy Convolvulus. Time went on, and excuses and delays were easily found; however, our hero was sanguine, and so were his parents. A breakfast at Chiswick, and a putrid fever, carried off the latter, within one week of each other; but not till they had blessed Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, and rejoiced that they had left him so well provided for.

Now, then, our hero depended solely upon the crabbed old uncle and Miss Helen Convolvulus; —the former, though a baronet and a satirist, was a banker and a man of business:—he looked very distastefully at the Hyperion curls and white teeth of Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy.

"If I make you my heir," said he—"I expect you will continue the bank."

"Certainly, sir!" said the nephew.

"Humph!" grunted the uncle, "a pretty fellow for a banker!"

Debtors grew pressing to Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy grew press-

ing to Miss Helen Convolvulus. "It is a dangerous thing," said she, timidly, "to marry a man so admired,—will you always be faithful?"

"By heaven!" cried the lover—

"Heigho!" sighed Miss Helen Convolvulus, and Lord Rufus Pumilion entering, the conversation was changed.

But the day of the marriage was fixed; and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy bought a new curricle. By Apollo, how handsome he looked in it! A month before the wedding-day the uncle died. Miss Helen Convolvulus was quite tender in her condolences—"Cheer up, my Ferdinand," said she, "for your sake, I have discarded Lord Rufus Pumilion!" "Adorable condescension!" cried our hero; "but Lord Rufus Pumilion is only four feet two, and has hair like a peony."

"All men are not so handsome as Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy!" was the reply.

Away goes our hero, to be present at the opening of his uncle's will.

"I leave," said the testator, (who, I have before said, was a bit of a satirist,) "my share of

the bank, and the whole of my fortune, legacies excepted, to"—(here Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy wiped his beautiful eyes with a cambric handkerchief, exquisitely *brodé*)—" my natural son, John Spriggs, an industrious, pains-taking youth, who will do credit to the bank. I did once intend to have made my nephew Ferdinand my heir; but so curly a head can have no talent for accounts. I want my successor to be a man of business, not beauty; and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy is a great deal too handsome for a banker; his good looks will, no doubt, win him any heiress in town. Meanwhile, I leave him, to buy a dressing-case, a thousand pounds."

" A thousand devils!" cried Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, banging out of the room. He flew to his mistress. She was not at home. " Lies," says the Italian proverb, " have short legs;" but truths, if they are unpleasant, have terribly long ones! The next day Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy received a most obliging note of dismissal.

" I wish you every happiness," said Miss Helen Convolvulus, in conclusion—" but my

friends are right; you are much too handsome for a husband!"

And the week following, Miss Helen Convolvulus became Lady Rufus Pumilion!

"Alas! sir," said the bailiff, as a day or two after the dissolution of Parliament, he was jogging along with Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, in a hackney coach bound to the King's Bench,—"Alas! sir, what a pity it is to take so handsome a gentleman to prison!"





THE NEW PHÆDO,

OR

CONVERSATIONS

ON THINGS HUMAN AND DIVINE,

WITH ONE CONDEMNED.

Τί οὖν δή εστιν ἅττα ἔιπεν ὁ ἀνὴρ πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου; καὶ πῶς ετελεύτα; ἡδέως γὰρ ἂν ἀκόυσαιμι.

Plat. Phæd. I.

THE NEW PHÆDO,

OR

CONVERSATIONS ON THINGS HUMAN AND DIVINE,

WITH ONE CONDEMNED.

I HAVE always loved the old form of Dialogue; not, indeed, so much for investigating truth, as for speaking of truths after an easy yet not uncritical or hasty fashion. More familiar than the Essay, more impressed with the attraction of individual character, the Dialogue has also the illustrious examples of old—to associate the class to which it belongs with no common-place or ignoble recollections. It may perhaps be still possible to give to the lighter and less severe philosophy, a form of expression at once dramatic and unpedantic. I have held, of late, some conversations, that do not seem to me altogether uninteresting, with a man whom I have long

considered of a singular and original character. I have obtained his permission to make these conversations public. They are necessarily of a desultory character—they embrace a variety of topics—they are marked and individualized only by that poetical and half-fantastic philosophy which belongs to my friend, and that melancholy colouring which befits a picture that has Death in the background. If they should appear now too florid—now too careless—in their diction,—I can only say that they faithfully represent the tone of conversation, that in excited moments is the characteristic of the principal speaker.—Would that, while I retail the inanimate words, I could convey to the reader the aspect, the expression, the smile, the accents low and musical, that lent their meaning all its charm. As it is, they would remain altogether untold, were it not for my friend's conviction that the seal is set upon the limit of his days, and did I not see sufficient evidence in his appearance to forbid me to hope that he can linger many months beyond the present date. To his mind, whatever be its

capacities, its cultivation, its aspirings, all matured and solid offspring is forbidden. These fugitive tokens of all he acquired, or thought, or felt, are, if we read aright human probabilities, the sole testimony that he will leave behind him; not a monument,—but at least a few leaves scattered upon his grave. I feel a pain in writing the above words, but will he?—No! or he has wronged himself. He looks from the little inn of his mortality, and anticipates the long summer journey before him; he repines not to-day that he must depart to-morrow.

On Saturday last, November 13th, I rode to L——'s habitation, which is some miles from my own home. The day was cold enough, but I found him with the windows of his room open, and feeding an old favourite in the shape of a squirrel, that had formerly been a tame companion. L——, on arriving at his present abode, had released it; but it came from the little copse in front of the windows every day to see its former master, and to receive some proof of remembrance from his good-natured hospitality.

CONVERSATION THE FIRST.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF EVIL IN THE WORLD—IS NO LESS VISIBLE IN THE LESSER CREATURES THAN IN MAN—THE HOPE OF PERFECTIBILITY—CHANGE IN THE TEMPERAMENT OF L——WHAT IS PLEASANT WHEN RECALLED IS OFTEN WEARISOME WHEN ACTED—LOVE—THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOM ON THE CONNUBIAL STATE—SOCIETY EXACTS IN PROPORTION AS IT IS PREPARED TO ADMIRE—L——'S SADNESS—DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN WIT AND HUMOUR—LOVE OF CONVERSATIONAL ARGUMENT LESS IN VOGUE THAN FORMERLY—OUR INABILITY TO CONCEIVE THE NATURE OF OUR HAPPINESS HEREAFTER—ANECDOTE OF FUSELI—PLATO—QUOTATION FROM LORD HERBERT OF CHERBURY—THE SENTIMENT THAT OUR FACULTIES CANNOT CONTENT THEMSELVES IN THIS LIFE VISIBLE IN THE WORKS OF GENIUS—THIS SENTIMENT MORE COMMON IN THE ENGLISH THAN THE CONTINENTAL POETS—THE SPIRITUALITY OF GOETHE'S GENIUS—OBSERVATION IN THE WILHELM MEISTER—SCOTT'S POETRY GREATER THAN HIS PROSE—THE PAINTER BLAKE AND HIS ILLUSTRATION OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS—YOUNG—HIS GLOOM SPREADS ONLY OVER THIS WORLD, WITHOUT DARKENING THE NEXT.

"After all," said L——, "though the short and simple annals of the poor are often miser-

able enough, no peasant lives so wretched a life as the less noble animals, whom we are sometimes tempted to believe more physically happy. Observe how uneasily this poor wretch looks around him. He is subject to perpetual terror from a large Angola cat, which my housekeeper chooses to retain in our domestic service, and which has twice very nearly devoured my nervous little hermit. In how large a proportion of creatures is existence composed of one ruling passion—the most agonizing of all sensations—*Fear!* No; human life is but a Rembrandt kind of picture at the best; yet we have no cause to think there are brighter colours in the brute world. Fish are devoured by intestinal worms; birds are subject to continual diseases, some of a very torturing nature. Look at yon ant-hill, what a melancholy mockery of our kind—what eternal wars between one hill and another—what wrong—what violence! You know the red ants invade the camps of the black, and bear off the young of these little negroes to be slaves to their victors. When I see throughout all nature the

same miseries, the same evil passions, whose effects are crime with us, but whose cause is instinct with the brutes, I confess there are moments when I feel a sort of despondence of our ultimate doom in this world: when I am almost inclined to surrender the noblest earthly hope that man ever formed, and which is solely the offspring of modern times—the hope of human perfectibility."

A. You have inclined, then, to the eloquent madness of Condorcet and De Stael! You have believed, then, in spite of the countless ages before us, in which the great successions of human kind are recorded by the Persian epitome of Universal History, "They were born, they were wretched, they died!"—you have believed, despite so long, so uniform, so mournful an experience, despite, too, our physical conformation, which, even in the healthiest and the strongest, subjects the body to so many afflictions, and therefore the temper to so many infirmities—you have believed that we yet may belie the past, cast off the slough of crimes, and

gliding into the full light of knowledge, become as angels in the sight of God—you have believed, in a word, that even on this earth, by progressing in wisdom we may progress to perfection.

L. What else does the age we live in betoken? Look around; not an inanimate object, not a block of wood, not a bolt of iron,

> "But doth suffer an *earth*-change
> Into something rich and strange."

Wherever man applies his intellect, behold how he triumphs. What marvellous improvements in every art, every ornament, every luxury of life! Why not these improvements ultimately in life itself? Are we "the very fiend's Arch-mock," that we can reform every thing, save that which will alone enable us to *enjoy* our victory—*the human heart?* In vain we grasp all things without, if we have no command over the things within. No! Institutions are mellowing into a brighter form; with Institutions the Character will expand: it will swell from the weak bonds of our foibles and our vices; and if we are fated never

to become perfect, we shall advance at least, and eternally, towards perfectibility. The world hath had two Saviours—one divine, and one human; the first was the Founder of our religion, the second the propagator of our knowledge. The second, and I utter nothing profane, it ministers to the first—the second is the might of the PRESS. By that, the Father of all safe revolutions, the Author of all permanent reforms—by that, man will effect what the First ordained—the reign of peace, and the circulation of love among the great herd of man.

A. Our conversation has fallen on a topic graver than usual; but these times give, as it were, a solemn and prophetic tone to all men who *think*, and are not yet summoned to act. I feel as if I stood behind a veil stretched across another and an unknown world, and waited in expectation, and yet in awe, the hand that was to tear it away.

L. Ay, I envy you at times, (but not always,) the long and bright career, that, for the first time in the world, is opened to a wise man's

ambition; you may live to tread it; you have activity and ardour; and, whether you fall or rise, the step forward you will at least adventure. But I am a bird chained, and the moment *my* chain is broken my course is heavenward and not destined to the earth. After all, what preacher of human vanities is like the Flesh, which is yet their author? Two years ago my limbs were firm, my blood buoyant—how boundless was my ambition! Now my constitution is gone—and so perish my desires of glory. You and I, A. . . . ., entered the world together;—

A. Yes,—yet with what different tempers!

L. True: you were less versatile, more reserved, more solidly ambitious, than myself; your tone of mind was more solemn, mine more eager: life has changed our dispositions, because it has altered our frames. That was a merry year, our first of liberty and pleasure!—but when the sparkle leaves the cup how flat is the draught; society is but the tinkling cymbal, and the gallery of pictures, the moment we dis-

cover that it hath no love. What makes us so wise as our follies?—the intrigues, the amours, that degrade us while enacted, enlighten us when they are passed away. We have been led, as it were, by the pursuit of a glittering insect to the summit of a mountain, and we see the Land of Life stretched below.

A. Yet shall we not exclaim, with Boileau,

"Souvent de tous nos maux la raison est le pire?"

These delusions were pleasant—

L. To remember—they were wearisome and unprofitable while we actually indulged them; a man plays the game of women with manifold disadvantages if he bring any heart to the contest: if he discover, with Marmontel's Alcibiades, that he has not been really loved, how deeply is he wounded—*if* he *have* been really loved how bitterly may he repent! Society is at war with all love except the connubial; and that love, how soon does it pass into the atmosphere of common-place! It loses its charm with me the moment I remark, which I always do re-

mark, that though the good pair may be very kind to each other on the whole, they have sacrificed respect to that most cruel of undeceivers, Custom. They have some little gnawing jest at each other; they have found out every mutual weakness; and, what is worse, they have found out the sting to it. " The breath of the south can shake the little rings of the vine," and the picture preserves no more " the colours and the beauties of kindness."* The only interesting and, if I may contradict Rochefoucault, the only *delicious* marriages are those in which the husband is wise enough to see very little of his wife; the absence of the morning prevents *ennui* in the evening, and frequent separations conquer the evil charm of Custom.

A. Thus it is that an ardent imagination so often unfits us for the real enjoyments of domestic attachment—custom blunts the imagination

* Jeremy Taylor, in that most divine sermon on the " Marriage Ring," which contains more knowledge of the mysteries of love and the true philtres wherewith it is preserved, than can be found in all that the love poets ever wrote.

more than it wearies the temper. But you had some bright moments in your first year of the world—I remember you the admired of all, the admirer of how many?

L. I was young, rich, well born; and I had an elastic and gay temper. See all my claims to notice! But the instant my high spirits forsook me, society cooled. It is not quite true that adventitious claims alone, unless of the highest order, give one a permanent place in the charmed circle of the Armidas of our age. Society is a feast where every man must contribute his quota, and when our seat at the table is noted as the home of silence and gloom, we are soon left to enjoy our meditations alone. Besides, the secret of fashion is to surprise, and never to disappoint. If you have no reputation for wit, you may succeed without it; if you have, people do not forgive you for falling below their expectations; they attribute your silence to your disdain; they see the lion, and are contented to go away; to abuse him, and to see him no more.

A. I have often been surprised to remark you so contented with silence, whom I have known in some circles so—shall I say?—brilliant.

L. There is no mystery in my content, it is in spite of myself. I have always preached up the *morality* of being gay; if I do not practise it, it is because I cannot. About two years ago my spirits fled suddenly me. In vain I endeavoured to rally them: in vain to force myself into the world—in vain "I heard music, and wooed the smile of women;" a sort of stupor seized and possessed me—I have never in mixed society been able, since that time, to shake it off; since then, too, I have slowly wasted away without any visible disease, and I am now literally dying of no disorder but the inability to live.

Speaking of wit, I met at a dinner a few months ago M—— and W—— I——, and two or three other persons, eminent, and deservedly, both for wit and for humour. One of them, I think M——, said, somebody or other had wit but no humour; it was asserted,

on the other hand, that the person spoken of had humour but no wit. I asked the disputants to define the difference between wit and humour, and of course they were struck dumb.

A. No rare instance of the essence of dispute, which consists in making every one allow what nobody understands.

L. Perhaps so; but really, to understand a thing thoroughly, is less necessary than you or I think for. Each of the disputants knew very well what he meant, but he could not explain; the difference was clear enough to serve his own mind as a guide, but, not being analyzed, it was not clear enough to be of use to others. Wit is the philosopher's quality, by the way—humour the poet's; the nature of wit relates to things, humour to persons. Wit utters brilliant truths, humour delicate deductions from the knowledge of *individual* character: Rochefoucault is witty, the Vicar of Wakefield is the model of humour.

A. While you define I could dispute your definition—shall I?

L. Not in conversation, we shall end in talk-

ing nonsense; metaphysical disputes on paper are very well, but spoken disputes are only good in special pleading.

A. When we were at Cambridge together, do you remember how the young pedants of our time were wont to consider that all intellect consisted in puzzling or setting down each other.

L. Ay, they thought us very poor souls, I fancy, for being early wise, and ridiculing what they thought so fine; but that love of conversational argument is less the mode now than in our grandfathers' time; then it made a celebrity. You see the intellectual Nestors of that time still very anxious to engage you. G—— is quite offended with me for refusing to argue Helvetius's system with him in a close carriage.

"Strangulat inclusus dolor atque exæstuat intus.'

A. The true spirit of conversation consists in building on another man's observation, not overturning it; thus, the wit says, "apropos of your remark;" and the disagreeable man exclaims, "I cannot agree with you."

Here our discourse was interrupted by the entrance of a female relation of L——'s; she came with his medicine, for though he considers himself beyond human aid, he does not affect to despise the more sanguine hopes of those attached to him. "Let them think," said he, "that they have done all they could for me: my boat is on the water, it is true, but it would be ill-natured if I did not loiter a little on the strand. It seems to me, by the way, a singular thing that, among persons about to die, we note so little of that anxious, intense, restless curiosity to know what will await them beyond the grave, which, with me, is powerful enough to conquer regret. Even those the most resigned to God, and the most assured of Revelation, know not, nor can dream, of the *nature* of the life, of the happiness, prepared for them. They know not *how* the senses are to be refined and sublimated into the faculties of a Spirit; they know not *how* they shall live, and move, and have their being; they know not whom they shall see, or what they shall hear; they know not the colour, the capa-

city of the glories with which they are to be brought face to face. Among the many mansions, which is to be theirs? All this, the matter of grand and of no irreverent conjecture; all this, it seems to me, so natural to revolve—all this I revolve so often, that the conjecture incorporates itself into a passion, and I am impatient to pass the Ebon Gate, and be lord of the Eternal Secret. Thus, as I approach nearer to death, Nature, and the Face of Things, assume a more solemn and august aspect. I look upon the leaves, and the grass, and the water, with a sentiment that is scarcely mournful; and yet I know not what else it may be called, for it is deep, grave, and passionate, though scarcely sad. I desire, as I look on those, the ornaments and children of earth, to know whether, indeed, such things I shall see no more—whether they have no likeness, no archetype in the world in which my future home is to be cast; or whether they *have* their images above, only wrought in a more wondrous and delightful mould. Whether, in the strange land that knoweth neither season

nor labour, there will not be, among all its glories, something familiar. Whether the heart will not recognize somewhat that it has known, somewhat of "the blessed household tones," somewhat of that which the clay loved and the spirit is reluctant to disavow. Besides, to one who, like us, has made a thirst and a first love of knowledge, what intenseness, as well as divinity, is there in that peculiar curiosity which relates to the extent of the knowledge we are to acquire! What, after all, is Heaven but a transition, from dim guesses and blind struggling with a mysterious and adverse fate, to the fulness of all wisdom—from ignorance, in a word, to knowledge—but knowledge of what order? Thus, even books have something weird and mystic in their speculations, which, some years ago, my spirit was too encumbered with its frame to recognize—for what of those speculations shall be true—what false? How far has our wisdom gone toward the arcanum of a true morality; how near has some daring and erratic reason approached to the secret of circulating

happiness round the world. Shall He, whom we now contemn as a visionary, be discovered to have been the inspired prophet of our blinded and deafened race; and shall He, whom we now honour as the lofty saint, or the profound teacher, be levelled to the propagator and sanctifier of narrow prejudices; the reasoner in a little angle of the great and scarce-discovered universe of Truth; the moral Chinese, supposing that his Empire fills the map of the world, and placing under an interdict the improvements of a nobler enlightenment?

A. But to those—and how many are there?—who doubt of the future world itself, this solace of conjecture must be but a very languid and chilled exertion of the mind.

L. I grant it. I am not referring to the herd, whether of one faith or another, or of none. I have often pleased myself with recalling an anecdote of Fuseli—a wonderful man, whose capacities in this world were only a tithe part developed; in every thing of his, in his writings as well as his paintings, you see the mighty intel-

lect struggling forth with labour and pain, and with only a partial success; and feeling this himself—feeling this contest between the glorious design and the crippled power—I can readily penetrate into his meaning in the reply I am about to repeat. Some coxcomb said to him, "Do you really believe, Mr. Fuseli, that I have a soul?"—"I don't know, sir," said Fuseli, "whether *you* have a soul or no, but, by God! I know that *I* have." And really, were it not for the glorious and all-circling compassion expressed by our faith, it would be a little difficult to imagine that the soul, that title-deed to immortality, were equal in all—equal in the dull, unawakened clod of flesh which performs the offices that preserve itself, and no more, and in the bright and winged natures with which we sometimes exalt our own, and which seem to have nothing human about them but the garments (to use the Athenian's* familiar metaphor,) which they wear away. You will

* Socrates.

smile at my pedantry, but one of the greatest pleasures I anticipate in arriving *at home*—as the Moravian sectarians so endearingly call Heaven—is to see Plato, and learn if he had ever rested, as he himself imagined, and I am willing to believe, in a brighter world before he descended to this. So bewitching is the study of that divine and most christian genius, that I have often felt a sort of jealous envy of those commentators who have devoted years to the contemplation of that mystical and unearthly philosophy. My ambition—had I enjoyed health—would never have suffered me to have become so dreaming a watcher over the lamp in another's tomb: but my imagination would have placed me in an ideal position, that my restlessness forbade me in reality. This activity of habit, yet love of literary indolence—this planning of schemes and conquests in learning, from which one smile from Enterprise would decoy me, when scarce begun, made C—— call me, not unaptly, "the most extraordinary reader he ever knew—

in theory." I see, by-the-by, that you are leaning upon the "Life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury"—will you open the page in which I have set a mark? We were speaking of the soul, and that page expresses a very beautiful, and eloquent, if not very deep sentiment, on the subject. Will you read it?

A. Certainly,—"As in my mother's womb,* that formatrix which formed my eyes, ears, and other senses, did not intend them for that dark and noisome place—but, as being conscious of a better life, made them as fitting organs to apprehend and perceive those things which occur in this world,—*so* I believe, since my coming into this world, my soul hath formed or produced certain faculties, which are almost as useless for this life as the above named senses were for the mother's womb; and these faculties are Hope, Faith, Love, and Joy, since they never rest or

* I am not sure that I retail this passage *verbatim.* I committed it to memory, and (writing in the country) I cannot now obtain the book by which to collate my recollection.

fix on any transitory or perishing object in this world—as extending themselves to something farther than can be here given, and, indeed, acquiescing only in the perfect Eternal and Infinite."

L. It is fine—is it not?

A. Yes. It is a proof that the writer *has* felt that vague something which carries us beyond the world. To discover the evidence of that feeling, is one of my first tasks in studying a great author. How solemnly it burns through Shakspeare! with what a mournful and austere grandeur it thrills through the yet diviner Milton! how peculiarly it has stamped itself in the pages of our later poets—Wordsworth, Shelley, and even the more alloyed and sensual, and less benevolent verse of Byron. But this feeling is rarely perceptible in any of the Continental poets, except, if I am informed rightly, the Germans.

L. Ay; Goëthe has it. To me there is something very mysterious and spiritual about Goëthe's genius—even that homely and plain sense with which, in common with all master-

minds, he so often instructs us, and which is especially evident in his Memoirs, is the more effective from some delicate and subtle beauty of sentiment with which it is always certain to be found in juxtaposition.

A. I remember a very delicate observation of his in "Wilhelm Meister," a book which had a very marked influence upon my own mind; and though the observation may seem common-place, it is one of a nature very peculiar to Goëthe: "When," he remarks, "we have despatched a letter to a friend which does not find him, but is brought back to us, what a singular emotion is produced by breaking open our own seal, and conversing with our altered self as with a third person."

L. There is something ghost-like in the conference, something like a commune with one's wraith.

A. You look in vain among the works of Scott for a remark like that.

L. Is the accusation fair? You look in vain in the "Wilhelm Meister" for the gorgeous

painting of "Ivanhoe." But I confess myself no idolater of the "Waverley" novels; nor can I subscribe to the justice of advancing them beyond the wonderful poetry that preceded them. All Scott's merits seem to me especially those of a poet; and when you come to his prose writings, you have the same feelings, the same descriptions, the same scenes, with the evident disadvantage of being stripped of a style of verse peculiarly emphatic, burning, and original. Where, in all the novels, is there a scene that, for rapidity, power, and the true lightning of the poet, if I may use the phrase, equals, that in "Rokeby," not often quoted now, in which Bertrand Risingham enters the church—

> "The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
> Like horse's hoof on harden'd ground," &c.
> *Rokeby*, Canto 6, stanza 32.

A scene, very celebrated for its compression and bold painting, is to be found in the "Bride of Abydos"—

> "One bound he made, and gain'd the strand."
> *Bride of Abydos*, Canto 2, stanza 24.

Compare the two. How markedly the comparison is in favour of Scott. In a word, he combines in his poetry all the merits of his prose; and the demerits of the latter—the trite moral, the tame love, the want of sympathy with the great herd of man, the aristocratic and kingly prejudice, either vanish from the poetry or assume a graceful and picturesque garb. I venture to prophesy that the world will yet discover that it has overrated one proof of his mighty genius, at the expense of injustice to another. Yes, his poetry burns with its own light. A reviewer in the "Edinbro'" observes, that "in spirit, however different in style, Shakspeare and Scott convey the best idea of Homer." The resemblance of Shakspeare to Homer I do not, indeed, trace; but that of Scott to the Great Greek, I have often and often noted. Scott would have translated Homer wonderfully, and in his own ballad metre.

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A. Of all enthusiasts, the painter Blake seems

to have been the most remarkable. With what a hearty faith he believed in his faculty of seeing spirits and conversing with the dead! And what a delightful vein of madness it was—with what exquisite verses it inspired him!

L. And what engravings! I saw, a few days ago, a copy of the "Night Thoughts," which he had illustrated in a manner at once so grotesque, so sublime—now by so literal an interpretation, now by so vague and disconnected a train of invention, that the whole makes one of the most astonishing and curious productions which ever balanced between the conception of genius and the raving of insanity. I remember two or three of his illustrations, but they are not the most remarkable. To these two fine lines—

> "'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past Hours,
> And ask them what report they bore to heaven;"

he has given the illustration of one sitting and with an earnest countenance conversing with a small, shadowy shape at his knee, while other shapes, of a similar form and aspect, are seen

gliding heavenward, each with a scroll in its hands. The effect is very solemn. Again, the line—

"Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all,"

is bodied forth by a grim savage with a huge spear, cheering on fiendish and ghastly hounds, one of which has just torn down, and is griping by the throat, an unfortunate fugitive: the face of the hound is unutterably death-like.

The verse—

"We censure Nature for a span too short,"

obtains an illustration, literal to ridicule.—A bearded man of gigantic stature is spanning an infant with his finger and thumb. Scarcely less literal, but more impressive, is the engraving of the following:—

"When Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,
And sings false peace till smother'd by the pall!"

You perceive a young female savage, with long locks, wandering alone, and exulting—while above, two bodiless hands expand a mighty pall,

that appears about to fall upon the unconscious rejoicer.

A. Young was fortunate. He seems almost the only poet who has had his mere metaphors illustrated and made corporeal.

L. What wonderful metaphors they are; sometimes trite, familiar, common-place—sometimes exaggerated and fantastic, but often how ineffably sublime! Milton himself has not surpassed them. But Young is not done justice to, popular as he is. He has never yet had a critic to display and make current his most peculiar and emphatic beauties.

A. We can, to be sure, but ill supply the place of such a critic; but let us, some day or other, open his "Night Thoughts" together, and make our comments.

L. It will be a great pleasure to me. Young is, of all poets, the one to be studied by a man who is about to break the golden chains that bind him to the world—his gloom, then, does not appal or deject: for it is a gloom that settles on the earth we are about to leave, and casts not

a single shadow over the heaven which it contrasts—the dark river of his solemn and dread images sweeps the thoughts onward to Eternity. We have no desire even to look behind; the ideas he awakens are, in his own words, "the pioneers of Death;" they make the road broad and clear; they bear down those "arrests and barriers," the Affections; the goal, starred and luminous with glory, is placed full before us; every thing else, with which he girds our path, afflicts and saddens. We recoil, we shudder at life; and, as children that in tears and agony at some past peril bound forward to their mother's knee, we hasten, as our comfort and our parent, to the bosom of Death.

CONVERSATION THE SECOND.

L——'S INCREASE OF ILLNESS—REMARKS ON A PASSAGE IN BACON—ADVANTAGES IN THE BELIEF OF IMMORTALITY—AN IDEA IN THE LAST CONVERSATION FOLLOWED OUT—A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SUBLIME—FEELINGS IN ONE DYING AT THE RESTLESSNESS OF LIFE AROUND.

WHEN I called on L—— the third day after the conversation I have attempted to record, though with the partial success that must always attend the endeavour to retail dialogue on paper, I found him stretched on his sofa, and evidently much weaker than when I had last seen him. He had suffered the whole night from violent spasms in the chest, and, though now free from pain, was labouring under the exhaustion which follows it. But nothing could wholly conquer

in him a certain high-wrought, rather than cheerful, elasticity of mind; and in illness it was more remarkable than in health; for I know not how it was, but in illness his thoughts seemed to stand forth more prominent, to grow more transparent, than they were wont in the ordinary state of the body. He had also of late, until his present malady, fallen into an habitual silence, from which only at moments he could be aroused. Perhaps now, however, when all his contemplations were bounded to a goal apparently near at hand, and were tinged with the grave (though in him not gloomy) colours common to the thoughts of death—that secret yearning for sympathy—*that desire to communicate*—inherent in man, became the stronger, for the short date that seemed allowed for its indulgence. Wishes long hoarded, reflections often and deeply revolved, finding themselves cut off from the distant objects which they had travailed to acquire, seemed wisely to lay down their burthen, and arrest their course upon a journey they were never destined to complete. "I have been

reading," said L——, (after we had conversed for some minutes about himself)—" that divine work on 'The Advancement of Learning.' What English writer (unless it be Milton in his prose works) ever lifted us from this low earth like Bacon? How shrink before his lofty sentences all the meagre consolation and trite commonplace of lecturers and preachers,—it is, as he has beautifully expressed it, upon no '*waxen wings*' that he urges the mind through the great courses of heaven. He makes us feel less earthly in our desires, by making us imagine ourselves *wiser*,—the love of a divine knowledge inspires and exalts us. And so nobly has he forced even our ignorance to contribute towards enlarging the soul—towards increasing our longings after immortality—that he never leaves us, like other philosophers, with a sense of self-littleness and dissatisfaction. With the same hand that limits our progress on earth, he points to the illimitable glories of heaven. Mark how he has done this in the passage I will read to you. As he proceeds in his sublime vindication

of Knowledge, 'from the discredits and disgraces it hath received all from ignorance, but ignorance, severally acquired, appearing sometimes in the zeal and jealousy of divines: sometimes in the severity and arrogance of politicians; sometimes in the errors and imperfections of learned men themselves;'—proceeding, I say, in this august and majestical defence, he states the legitimate limits of knowledge, as follows:—'first, that we do not so place our felicity in knowledge, as to forget our mortality; secondly, that we make application of our knowledge, to give ourselves repose and contentment, not distaste or repining; thirdly, that we do not presume, by the contemplation of Nature, to attain to the mysteries of God.' After speaking of the two first limits, he comes as follows to the last. 'And for the third point, it deserveth to be a little stood upon, and not to be lightly passed over; for if any man shall think, by view and inquiry into these sensible and material things, to attain that light, whereby he may reveal unto himself the nature or will of God, then indeed is

he spoiled by vain philosophy; for the contemplation of God's creatures and works produceth *(having regard to the works and creatures themselves)* knowledge; but *(having regard to God)* no perfect knowledge, but wonder, which is broken knowledge. And therefore, (note how wonderfully this image is translated, and how beautifully applied,) it was most aptly said by one of Plato's school, 'that the sense of man carrieth a resemblance with the sun, which, as we see, openeth and revealeth all the terrestrial globe; but then again it obscureth the stars and celestial globe: so doth the sense discover natural things, but it darkeneth and shutteth up divine.'" Tell me now, and speak frankly, not misled by the awe and antique splendour of the language alone,—tell me whether you do not feel, in the above passages, not humbled by your ignorance, but transported and raised by its very conviction; for, by leaving the mysteries of heaven, and heaven *alone;* unpenetrated by our knowledge, what do we, in reality, but direct the secret and reverent desires of our hearts to

that immortal life, which shall put the crown upon the great ambition of knowledge, and reveal those mysteries which are shut out from us in this narrow being? Here then there is nothing to lower our imagination,—nothing to chill us in the ardour of our best aspirings,—nothing to disgust us with the bounds of knowledge, or make us recoil upon ourselves with the sense of vanity, of emptiness, of desolation. It is this—the peculiar prerogative of the conviction of our inborn immortality, to take away from us that bitterness at the checks and arrests of knowledge, of which the wise of all ages have complained,—to give wings to our thoughts at the very moment they are stopped on their earthly course,—to ennoble us from ourselves at the moment when self languishes and droops: it is this prerogative, I say, which has always seemed to me the greatest advantage which a thinking man, who believes in our immortality, has over one who does not. And though, fortunately for mankind, and for all real virtue, the time is rapidly passing away for attempting

to measure the conduct of others by the proportion in which their opinions resemble our own, yet it must be confessed, that he who claims this prerogative has a wonderful advantage over him who rejects it—in the acquisition of noble and unworldly thoughts—in the stimulus to wisdom, and the exalting of the affections, the visions, and the desires! It seems to me as if not only the Form, but the SOUL of Man was made "to walk erect, and to look upon the stars."

A.—(After some pause.)—Whether or not that it arises from this sentiment, common (however secretly nursed) to the generality of men; this sentiment, that the sublimest sources of emotion and of wisdom remain as yet unknown, there is one very peculiar characteristic in all genius of the highest order; viz. even its loftiest attempts impress us with the feeling, that a vague but glorious "SOMETHING" inspired or exalted the attempt, *and yet remains unexpressed.* The effect is like that of the spire, which, by insensibly tapering into heaven, owes

its pathos and its sublimity to the secret thoughts with which that heaven is associated.

L. Yes; and this, which, you say justly, is the characteristic of the loftiest order of genius, is that token and test of sublimity so especially insisted upon by the ancients, who, perhaps, in consequence of the great scope left by their religion to inquiry, were more impressed with the sentiment we speak of, than is common to the homelier sense, and the satisfied and quiet contemplations of the moderns. The illustrious friend of Zenobia* has made it a characteristic of the true sublime, to leave behind it something more to be contemplated than is expressed; and again, Pliny, speaking of painters, observes, I think of Timanthes, "that in his works something more† than was painted was understood, and that when his art was at the highest, the genius was beyond the art." It is this which especially designates the poetry of Young.

* Longin. Sect. 7.

† "In unius hujus operibus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur; et cum sit ars summa, ingenium tamen ultra artem est."

A. Whom we were to criticise.

L. Yes; but not to-day. My mood is brighter than that of the poet, whose soul walketh in the valley of *the shadow* of death. Let us enter upon our task, when we can both feel thoroughly satisfied with the consolations of his gloom, and forget the darkness around, in the stars "which he calls to listen."* What news is there stirring in this lower world?

Here we talked for some time on the aspect of affairs, the administration, the disturbances in the country.† I told him of a distinguished contemporary of ours at Cambridge, who had been just returned to Parliament. L—— spoke at large on his own ambition to enter a public career. "I think," said he, "if I had even at this moment the opportunity to do so, the activity, the zeal, the stimulus, which the change would produce, might yet save my life. I feel now, as if certain

* "And call the stars to listen."
Young's Night Thoughts.

† Written in 1831, before the passing of the Reform Bill.

sources of emotion dammed up, were wasting my heart away with a suppressed ebb and flow, as if all my keenest energies were rusting in their scabbard. I should not, were I plunged into action, have time to die. As it is, I feel, like the old sage, who covered his face with his cloak, and sate himself down, waiting for death.

A. But why not enter public life then at once?

L. Look at me. Am I in a state to canvass some free borough? to ride here—to walk there—to disguise—to bustle—to feast—to flatter—to lie?

A. But your relation, Lord L——?

L. Has offered me a seat if I will support his party, the old Tories.

A. And your college friend, N——?

L. Has forgotten me; yet none more than he will grieve, for an hour at least, when I am dead. Let me return to my image of the sage and his cloak, I have always thought it one of the most affecting anecdotes in history. When Pericles, hearing of the determination of the

philosopher, (who, you remember, was his preceptor, Anaxagoras,) hastened to the spot where he sat, and tarried for the last release; he implored the sage in a late and unavailing grief to struggle with his approaching fate, and to baffle the gathering death. "Oh, Pericles," said the old man, stung by the memory of long neglect, and in a feeble and dying voice, as he just lifted his face from his mantle, "they who need the lamp do not forget to feed it with oil."

Returning to the excitement and the animation of the political world around; how strangely falls the sound of tumult on the ear of one who is about to die—how strange doth it seem to behold life so busy and death so near! It is this contrast which, I own, gives me the most mournful—though vague and reluctantly acknowledged—feelings that I experience; it gives me a dejection, an envy; my higher and more soaring thoughts desert me, I become sensible only of my weakness, of my want of use, in this world where all are buckling to their armour, and awaiting an excitation, an enterprise, and a

danger. I remember all my old ambition—my former hopes—my energies—my anticipations; I see the great tides of action sweep over me, and behold myself not even wrestling with death, but feel it gather and darken upon me, unable to stir or to resist. I could compare myself to some neglected fountain in a ruined city: amidst the crumbling palaces of Hope, which have fallen around me, the waters of life ooze away in silence and desolation."

L——'s voice faltered a little as he spoke, and his dog, whether, as I often think, there is in that animal an instinct which lets him know by a look, by a tone of voice, when the object of his wonderful fidelity and affection is sad at heart; his dog, an old pointer, that he had cherished for many years, and was no less his companion in the closet, than it had been in the chase, came up to him and licked his hand. I own this little incident affected me, and the tears rushed into my eyes. But I was yet more softened when I saw L——'s tears were falling fast over the honest countenance of the dog; I

well what was passing in his mind—no
ınly weakness—no repining at death; of all
he had suffered most, and felt most keenly,
eglect and perfidy of friends; and, at that
ent, he was contrasting a thousand bitter
mbrances with the simple affection of that
ıle companion. I never saw L—— *weep*
e, though I have seen him in trying afflic-
, and though his emotions are so easily ex-
that he never utters a noble thought, or
a touching sentiment in poetry, but you
perceive a certain moisture in his eyes, and
ver on his lips.

ır conversation drooped after this, and
gh I stayed with him for some hours longer,
not remember any thing else that day,
ı repeating.

CONVERSATION THE THIRD.

THE FRENCH WORLDLY PHILOSOPHERS—THE FIRST STEP IN WISDOM IS TO LEARN TO *THINK*, NO MATTER HOW—THOUGHT CORRECTS ITSELF—BRILLIANT WRITERS *LESS* DANGEROUS THAN DULL ONES —WHY—FAULTS OF CERTAIN PHILOSOPHERS—L...., THE RESPECTFUL AFFECTION HE EXCITES—THE HEART TURNS FROM DEATH—PASSAGE IN BOLINGBROKE—PRIVATE LIFE DOES NOT AFFORD A VENT FOR ALL OUR SUSCEPTIBILITIES—A TOUCHING THOUGHT IN MILTON'S LATIN POEMS—REMARKS ON BYRON, AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE POET FOR THE PRESENT DAY—PORTRAIT OF A HERO IN THE SERVICE OF TRUTH.

I CALLED on L—— the next day; K——, one of the few persons he admits, was with him; they were talking on those writers who have directed their philosophy towards matters of the world; who have reduced wisdom into epigrams, and given the Goddess of the Grove and the Portico the dress of a lady of fashion. "Never,

perhaps," said K——, "did Virtue, despite the assertion of Plato, that we had only to behold in order to adore her, attract so many disciples to wisdom as Wit has done. How many of us have been first incited to reason, have first learned to think, to draw conclusions, to extract a moral from the follies of life, by some dazzling aphorism from Rochefoucault or La Bruyère! Point, like rhyme, seizes at once the memory and the imagination: for my own part, I own frankly, that I should never have known what it was to reflect—I should never have written on Political Economy—I should never have penetrated into the character of my rogue of a guardian, and saved my fortune by a timely act of prudence —I should never have chosen so good a wife —nay, I should never have been L——'s friend, if I had not, one wet day at Versailles, stumbled upon Rochefoucault's Maxims: from that moment *I thought*, and I thought very erroneously and very superficially for some time, but the habit of thinking, by degrees, cures the faults of its noviciateship; and I often bless

Rochefoucault as the means which redeemed me from a life of extravagance and debauchery, from the clutches of a rascal, and made me fond of rational pursuits and respectable society. Yet how little would Rochefoucault's book seem, to the shallow declaimer on the heartlessness of its doctrines, calculated to produce so good an effect.

A. Yes, the faults of a brilliant writer are never dangerous on the long run, a thousand people read his work who would read no other; inquiry is directed to each of his doctrines, it is soon discovered what is sound and what is false; the sound become star-lights, and the false beacons. But your dull writer is little conned, little discussed. Debate, that great winnower of the corn from the chaff, is denied him; the student hears of him as an authority, reads him without a guide, imbibes his errors, and retails them as a proof of his learning. In a word, the dull writer does not attract to wisdom those indisposed to follow it: and to those who are disposed he bequeaths as good a chance of inheriting a blunder as a truth.

L. I will own to you very frankly that I have

one objection *to beginning to think*, from the thoughts of these worldly inquirers. Notwithstanding Rochefoucault tells us himself, with so honest a gravity, that he had "les sentimens beaux," and that he approved "extrêmement les belles passions," his obvious tendency is not to ennoble; he represents the Tragi-comedy of the Great World, but he does not excite us to fill its grand parts; he tells us some of the real motives of men, but he does not tell us also the better motives with which they are entwined, and by cultivating which they can be purified and raised. This is what I find, not to blame, but to lament, in most of the authors who have very shrewdly, and with a felicitous and just penetration, unravelled the vices and errors of mankind. I find it in La Bruyère, in Rochefoucault, even in the more weak and tender Vauvenargues, whose merits have, I think, been so unduly extolled by Dugald Stewart; I find it in Swift, Fielding, (admirable moralist as the latter indubitably is in all the lesser branches of morals,) and, among the

ancients, who so remarkable for the same want as the sarcastic and inimitable Lucian? But let us not judge hastily; this want of nobleness, so to speak, is not *necessarily* the companion of shrewdness. But mark, where we find the noble and the shrewd united, we acknowledge at once a genius of the *very highest* order; we acknowledge a Shakspeare, a Tacitus, a Cervantes.

A. Another characteristic of the order of writers we refer to is this—they are too apt to disregard books and to write from their own experience; now an experience, backed upon some wide and comprehensive theory, is of incalculable value to Truth; but, where that theory is wanting, the experience makes us correct in minute points, but contracted, and therefore in error, on the whole; for error is but a view of *some* facts instead of a survey of *all.*

L. In a word, it is with philosophers as with politicians; the experience that guides the individuals must be no rule for the community. And here I remember a fine and just comparison of the Emperor Julian's: speaking of some one

who derived knowledge from practice rather than principle, he compares him to an empiric who, by practice, may cure one or two diseases with which he is familiar; but having no system, or theory of art, must necessarily be ignorant of the innumerable complaints which have not fallen under his personal observation. Yet *now*, when a man ventures to speak of a comprehensive and scientific theory, in opposition to some narrow and cramped practice, *he* who in reality is the physician,—" *he* is exclaimed against as the quack."

Shortly after this part of our conversation, K—— went away, and we talked on some matters connected with L——'s private and household affairs. By degrees, while our commune grew more familiar and confidential, and while the shades of these long winter evenings gathered rapidly over us, as we sate alone by the fire, L—— spoke of some incidents in his early history—and I who had always felt a deep interest in even the smallest matter respecting him, and, despite our intimacy, was unacquainted with many particulars of his life, in which I fancied there

must be something not unworthy recital, pressed him earnestly to give me a short and frank memoir of his actual and literary life. Indeed, I was anxious that some portion of the world should know as much as may now be known of one who is of no common clay, and who, though he has not numbered many years, and has passed some of those years in the dissipation and pleasure common to men of his birth and wealth, is now, at least, never mentioned by those who know him without a love bordering on idolatry, and an esteem more like the veneration we feel for some aged and celebrated philosopher, than the familiar attachment generally felt for those of our own years and of no public reputation.

"As to my early LIFE," said L——, smiling in answer to my urgent request, "I feel that it is but an echo of an echo. I do not refuse, however, to tell it you, such as it is; for it may give food to some observations from you more valuable than the events which excite them; and, as to some later epochs in my short career, it will comfort me, even while it wounds, to speak of them. Come to me, then, to-morrow,

and I will recall in the mean while what may best merit repeating in the memoir you so inconsiderately ask for. But do not leave me yet, dear A——. Sit down again—let us draw nearer to the fire—How many scenes have we witnessed in common—how many enterprises have we shared! let us talk of these, and to-morrow shall come *my* solitary history: self, self, the eternal self—let us run away from it one day more. Could you but know how forcibly it appears to me, that as life wanes the affections warm; I have observed this in many instances of *early* death;—early, for in the decay by years the heart outlives all its ties. As the physical parts stiffen, so harden the moral. But in youth, when all the Affections are green within us, they will not willingly perish; they stretch forth their arms, as it were, from their ruined and falling prison-house—they yearn for expansion and release. 'Is it,' as that divine, though often sullied nature, at once the luminary and the beacon to English statesmen, has somewhere so touchingly asked, 'is it that we

grow more tender as the moment of our great separation approaches, or is it that they who are to live together in another state (for friendship exists not but for the good) begin to feel more strongly that divine sympathy which is to be the great bond of their future society?'"*

I could have answered this remark by an allusion to the change in the physical state; the relaxation of illness; the helplessness we feel when sick, and the sense of dependence, the desire to *lean somewhere*, that the debility of disease occasions. But I had no wish to chill or lower the imaginative turn of reasoning to which L—— was inclined, and after a little pause he continued: "For men who have ardent affections, there seems to me no medium between public life and dissatisfaction. In public life those affections find ample channel; they become benevolence, or patriotism, or the spirit of party—or, finally, attaching themselves to things, not persons, concentrate into ambition. But in private life, who, after the first enthusiasm of passion departs, who, possessed of a fervent and tender

* Bolingbroke's Letters to Swift.

soul, is ever contented with the return it meets? A word, a glance, chills us; we ask for too keen a sympathy; we ourselves grow irritable that we find it not—the irritability offends; that is attributed to the temper which in reality is the weakness of the heart—accusation, dispute, coldness, succeed. We are flung back upon our own breasts, and so comes one good or one evil—we grow devout or we grow selfish. Denied vent among our fellows, the affections find a refuge in heaven, or they centre in a peevish and lonely contraction of heart, and self-love becomes literally, as the forgotten Lee has expressed it generally,

'The axletree that darts through all the frame.'

This inevitable alternative is more especially to be noted in women; their affections are more acute than ours, so also is their disappointment. It is thus you see the credulous fondness of the devotee, or the fossilized heart of the solitary crone, where, some thirty years back, you would have witnessed a soul running over with love for all things and the yearning to be

loved again! Ah! why, why is it that no natures are made wholly alike? why is it that, of all blessings, we long the most for sympathy? and of all blessings it is that which none (or the exceptions are so scanty as not to avail) can say, after the experience of years and the trial of custom, that they have possessed. Milton, whose fate through life was disappointment—disappointment in his private ties and his public attachments—Milton, who has descended to an unthinking posterity as possessing a mind, however elevated, at least austere and harsh, has, in one of his early Latin poems, expressed this sentiment with a melancholy and soft pathos, not often found in the golden and Platonic richness of his youthful effusions in his own language—

'Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus invenit unum;
Aut si fors dederit tandem non aspera votis
Illum inopina dies—qua non speraveris hora
Surripit—eternum linquens in sæcula damnum.'*

* Thus prosaically translated:

"Scarce one in thousands meets a kindred heart;
Or, if no harsh fate grant, at last, his dreams,
Swift comes the unforeboded Doom;—and lo,
Leaves to all time the everlasting loss!"

"And who is there that hath not said to himself, if possessed for a short time of one heart, entirely resembling and responding to his own, —who has not said to himself daily and hourly, '*This* cannot last!' Has he not felt a dim, unacknowledged dread of death? has he not, for the first time, shrunk from penetrating into the future? has he not become timorous and uneasy? is he not like the miser who journeys on a road begirt with a thousand perils, and who yet carries with him his all? Alas! there was a world of deep and true feeling in Byron's expression, which, *critically* examined, is but a conceit. Love 'hath, indeed, made his best interpreter a sigh.'"

A. Say what we will of Lord Byron, and thinking men are cooling from the opinion first passed upon him, no poet hath touched upon more of the common and daily chords of our nature.

L. His merits have undoubtedly been erroneously ranked and analysed; and the just criticism of them is yet to come. Nothing seems to

me more singular in the history of imitation than the extraordinary misconception which all Lord Byron's imitators incurred with respect to the strain they attempted to echo. The great characteristics of Lord Byron are vigour and nerve—he addresses the common feelings—he never grows mawkish, nor girlishly sentimental—he never, despite all his digressions, encourages the foliage to the prejudice of the fruit. What are the characteristics of all the imitators?—they are weak—they whine—they address *no* common passion—they heap up gorgeous words—they make pyramids of flowers—they abjure vigour—they talk of appealing "to the few congenial minds"—they are proud of wearying you, and consider the want of interest the proof of a sublime genius. Byron, when he complains, is the hero who shows his wounds; his imitators are beggars in the street, who cry, "Look at these sores, Sir!" In the former case there is pathos, because *there is admiration* as well as pity; in the latter there is disgust, because there is at once con-

tempt for the practised whine and the feigned disease. A man who wishes now to succeed in poetry must be imbued deeply with the spirit of this day, not that of the past: he must have caught the mighty inspiration which is breathing throughout the awakened and watchful world: with enthusiasm he must blend a common and plain sense; he must address the humours, the feelings, and the understandings of the middle as well as the higher orders; he must find an audience in Manchester and Liverpool. The aristocratic gloom, the lordly misanthropy, that Byron represented, have perished amidst the action, the vividness, the *life* of these times. Instead of sentiment, let shrewd wit or determined energy be the vehicle; instead of the habits and modes of a few, let the great interests of the many be the theme.

A. But, in this country, the aristocracy yet make the first class of readers into whose hands poetry falls; if *they* are not conciliated, the book does not become the fashion—if not the fashion, the middle orders will never read it.

L. But can this last?—can it even last long? Will there be no sagacious, no powerful critic, who will drag into notice what can fall only into a temporary neglect? I say temporary, for you must allow that whatever addresses the multitude through *their* feelings, or their *everlasting interests*, must be destined to immortality: the directors, the lovers of the multitude, glad of an authority, will perpetually recur to its pages—attention directed to them, fame follows. To prophesy whether or not, in these times, a rising author will become illustrious, let me inquire only, after satisfying me of his genius, how far he is the servant of Truth—how far he is willing to dedicate all his powers to her worship —to come forth from his cherished moods of thought, from the strongholds of mannerism and style—let me see him disdain no species of composition that promotes her good, now daring the loftiest, now dignifying the lowest—let me see him versatile in the method, but the same in the purpose—let him go to every field for the garland or the harvest, but be there one altar for

all the produce! Such a man cannot fail of becoming GREAT; through envy, through neglect, through hatred, through persecution, he will win his way; he will neither falter nor grow sick at heart; he will feel, in every privation, in every disappointment, the certainty of his reward; he will indulge enthusiasm, nor dread ridicule; he will brandish the blade of satire, nor fear the enmity he excites. By little and little, men will see in him who fights through all obstacles a champion and a leader. When a Principle is to be struggled for, on him will they turn their eyes; when a Prejudice is to be stormed, they will look to see his pennant wave the first above the breach. Amidst the sweeping and gathering Deluge of ages, he shall be saved, for TRUTH is the indestructible and blessed Ark to which he hath confided his name!

CONVERSATION THE FOURTH.

CONTAINING L——'S HISTORY.

In order to make allowance for much of the manner and the matter of L——'s conversation, I must beg the reader to observe how largely the faculties of the imagination enter even into those channels of his mind from which (were the judgment thoroughly sound) all that is merely imaginative would be the most carefully banished. In L——'s character, indeed, whatever may be his talents, there was always *a string*

loose, something morbid and vague, which even in perceiving, one could scarcely contemn, for it gave a tenderness to his views, and a glow of sentiment to his opinions, which made us love him better, perhaps, than if his learning and genius had been accompanied with a severer justness of reasoning. For my own part, I, who despise rather than hate the world, and seldom see any thing that seems to me, if rightly analyzed, above contempt, am often carried away in spite of myself by his benevolence of opinion, and his softening and gentle order of philosophy. I often smile, as I listen to his wandering and Platonic conjectures on our earthly end and powers, but I am not sure that the smile is in disdain, even when his reasoning appears the most erratic.

I reminded L——, when I next saw him, of his promise, in our last conversation, to give me a sketch of his early history. I wished it to be the history of his mind as well as his adventures; in a word, a literary and moral, as well as actual narrative,—"A MEMOIR OF A STU-

DENT." The moment in which I pressed the wish, was favourable. He was in better spirits than usual, and free from pain; the evening was fine, and there was that quiet cheerfulness in the air which we sometimes find towards the close of one of those mild days that occasionally relieve the severity of an English winter.

THE CONFESSIONS OF AN AMBITIOUS STUDENT.

"You know," said L——, commencing his story, "that I was born to the advantages of a good name and of more than a moderate opulence; the care of my education, for I was an orphan, devolved upon my aunt, a maiden lady, of some considerable acquirements and some very rare qualities of heart. Good old woman! how well and how kindly I remember her, with her high cap and kerchief, the tortoise-shell spectacles, that could not conceal or injure the gentle expression of her eyes—eyes above which the brow never frowned! How well, too, I remember

the spelling-book, and the grammar, and (as I grew older) the odd volume of Plutarch's Lives, that always lay, for *my* use and profit, on the old dark table beside her chair. And something better too, than spelling and grammar, ay, and even the life of Caius Marius, with that grand and terrible incident in the memoir which Plutarch has so finely told, of how the intended murderer, entering the great Roman's hiding-chamber, (as he lay there, stricken by years and misfortune,) saw through the dim and solemn twilight of the room, the eye of the purposed victim fall like a warning light upon him, while a voice exclaimed, 'Darest thou, man, to slay Caius Marius?' and how the stern Gaul, all awe-stricken and amazed, dropped the weapon, and fled from the chamber; better, I say, even than spelling and grammar, and these fine legends of old, were certain homely precepts with which my good aunt was wont to diversify the lecture. Never to tell a lie, never to do a mean action, never to forsake a friend, and never to malign a foe; these were the hereditary maxims

of her race, and these she instilled into my mind as something, which if I duly remembered, even the sin of forgetting how to spell words in eight syllables might be reasonably forgiven me.

"I was sent to school when I was somewhere about seven years old, and I remained at that school till I was twelve, and could construe Ovid's Epistles. I was then transplanted to another, better adapted to my increased years and wisdom. Thither I went with a notable resolution which greatly tended in its consequences to expand my future character. At my first academy, I had been so often and so bitterly the victim of the exuberant ferocity of the elder boys, that I inly resolved, the moment I was of an age and stature to make any reasonable sort of defence, to anticipate the laws of honour, and never put up, in tranquil endurance, with a blow. When, therefore, I found myself at a new school, and at the age of twelve years, I saw (in my fancy) the epoch of resistance and emancipation, which I had so long coveted. The third day of

my arrival I was put to the proof; I was struck by a boy twice my size—I returned the blow—we fought, and I was conquered, but he never struck me again. That was an admirable rule of mine, if a boy has but animal hardihood; for, for one sound beating one escapes at least twenty lesser ones, with teasings, and tormentings indefinitely numerous, into the bargain. No boy likes to engage with a boy much less than himself, and rather than do so, he will refrain from the pleasure of tyrannizing. We cannot, alas! in the present state of the world, learn too early the great wisdom of *Resistance*. I carried this rule, however, a little too far, as you shall hear. I had never been once touched, once even chidden by the master, till one day, when I was about fifteen, we had a desperate quarrel, ending in my expulsion. There was a certain usher in the school, a very pink and pattern of ushers. He was harsh to the lesser boys, but he had his favourites among them—fellows who always called him 'Sir,' and offered him oranges. To us of the higher school, he was generally cour-

teous, and it was a part of his policy to get himself invited home by one or the other of us during the holidays. For this purpose he winked at many of our transgressions, allowed us to give feasts on a half-holiday, and said nothing if he discovered a crib* in our possession. But, oh, to the mistress, he was meekness in a human shape. Such humble and sleek modesty never appeared before in a pair of drab inexpressibles and long gaiters. How he praised her pudding on a Sunday! how he extolled her youngest dunce on his entrance into Greek! how delicately he hinted at her still existent charms, when she wore her new silk gown at the parish church! and how subtly he alluded to her gentle influence over the rigid doctor. Somehow or other, between the usher and myself there was a feud; we looked on each other not lovingly; he said I had set the boys against him, and I accused him, in my own heart, of doing me no good service with the fat school-

* The cant word at schools for a literal translation of some classic author.

mistress. Things at length came to an open rupture. One evening, after school, the usher was indulging himself, with one of the higher boys, in the gentle recreation of a game at draughts. Now, after school, the school-room belonged solely and wholly to the boys; it was a wet afternoon, and some half-a-dozen of us entered into a game, not quite so quiet as that the usher was engaged in. Mr. —— commanded silence; my companions were awed—not so myself; I insisted on our right to be as noisy as we would out of school. My eloquence convinced them, and we renewed the game. The usher again commanded silence; we affected not to hear him. He rose; he saw me in the act of rebellion.

"'Mr. L——,' cried he, 'do you hear me, Sir? Silence!'

"'I beg your pardon, Sir; but we have a right to the school-room after hours; especially of a wet evening.'

"'Oh! very well, Sir; very well; I shall report you to the Doctor.' So saying, the usher

buttoned up his nether garment, which he had a curious custom of unbracing after school,—especially when engaged in draughts, and went forthwith to the master. I continued the game. The master entered. He was a tall, gaunt, lame man, very dark in hue, and of a stern Cameronian countenance, with a cast in his eye.

"'How is this, Mr. L——?' said he, walking up to me; 'how dared you disobey Mr. ——'s orders?'

"'Sir! his orders were against the custom of the school.'

"'Custom, Sir; and who gives custom to this school but myself? You are insolent, Mr. L——, and you don't know what is due to your superiors.'

"'Superiors!' said I, with a look at the usher. The master thought I spoke of himself; his choler rose, and he gave me a box on the ear.

"All my blood was up in a moment; never yet, under that roof, had I received a blow un-

avenged on the spot. I had fought my way in the school, step by step, to the first ranks of pugilistic heroism. Those taller and more peaceable than myself, hated me, but attacked not; these were now around me exulting in my mortification; I saw them *nudge* each other with insolent satisfaction; I saw their eyes gloat and their features grin. The master had never before struck a boy in my class. The insult was tenfold, because unparalleled. All these thoughts flashed across me. I gathered myself up, clenched my fist, and, with a sudden and almost unconscious effort, I returned, and in no gentle manner, the blow I had received. The pedagogue could have crushed me on the spot; he was a remarkably powerful man. I honour him at this moment for his forbearance; at that moment I despised him for his cowardice. He looked thunderstruck, after he had received so audacious a proof of my contumacy; the blood left, and then gushed burningly back to, his sallow cheek. 'It is well, Sir,' said he, at length, 'follow me!' and he walked straight out of the

school-room. I obeyed with a mechanical and dogged sullenness. He led the way into the house, which was detached from the school-room; entered a little dingy front parlour, in which only once before (the eve of my first appearance under his roof) had I ever set foot; motioned me also within the apartment; gave me one stern, contemptuous look; turned on his heel; left the room; locked the door, and I was alone. At night the maid-servants came in, and made up a bed on a little black horsehair sofa. There was I left to repose. The next morning came at last. My breakfast was brought me, in a mysterious silence. I began to be affected by the monotony and dulness of my seclusion. I looked carefully round the little chamber for a book, and at length, behind a red tea-tray, I found one. It was—I remember it well—it was Beloe's Sexagenarian. I have never looked into the book since, but it made considerable impression on me at the time—a dull, melancholy impression, like that produced on us by a rainy, drizzling day; there seemed to me then a stag-

nant quiet, a heavy repose about the memoir which saddened me with the idea of a man writing the biography of a life never enjoyed, and wholly unconscious that it had not been enjoyed to the utmost. It is very likely that this impression is not a just one, and were I to read the book again, it might create very different sensations. But I recollect that I said, at some passage or another, with considerable fervour, 'Well, I will never devote existence to becoming a scholar.' I had not finished the book, when the mistress entered, as if looking for a bunch of keys, but in reality to see how I was employed; a very angry glance did she cast upon my poor amusement with the Sexagenarian, and about two minutes after she left the room, a servant entered and demanded the book. The reading of the Sexagenarian remains yet unconcluded, and most probably will so remain to my dying day. A gloomy evening and a sleepless night succeeded; but early next morning a ring was heard at the gate, and from the window of my dungeon, I saw the servant open the gate, and

my aunt walk up the little strait ribbon of gravel, that intersected what was termed the front garden. In about half an hour afterwards, the Doctor entered with my poor relation, the latter in tears. The Doctor had declared himself inexorable; nothing less than my expulsion would atone for my crime. Now my aunt was appalled by the word expulsion; she had heard of boys to whom expulsion had been ruin for life; on whom it had shut the gates of college; the advantages of connexion; the fold of the church; the honours of civil professions; it was a sound full of omen and doom to her ear. She struggled against what she deemed so lasting a disgrace. I remained in the dignity of silence, struck to the heart by her grief and reproaches, but resolved to show no token of remorse.

" 'Look, Ma'am,' cried the Doctor, irritated by my obstinacy; 'look at the young gentleman's countenance: do you see repentance there?' My aunt looked, and I walked to the window to hide my face. This finished the business, and I

returned home that day with my aunt; who saw in me a future outcast, and a man undone for life, for want of a proper facility in bearing boxes on the ear.

"Within a week from that time I was in the house of a gentleman, who professed not to keep a school, but to take pupils,—a nice distinction, that separates the schoolmaster from the tutor. There were about six of us, from the age of fifteen to eighteen. He undertook to prepare us for the University, and with him, in real earnest, I, for the first time, began *to learn*. Yes; *there* commenced an epoch both in my mind and heart,—I woke to the knowledge of books and also of myself. In one year I passed over a world of feelings. From the child I rose at once into the man. But let me tell my story methodically; and first, as to the education of the intellect. Mr. S—— was an elegant and graceful scholar, of the orthodox University *calibre*, not deeply learned, but intimately acquainted with the beauties and the subtleties of the authors he had read. You know, A——, what authors an

University scholar does read, and those which he neglects. At this time, it is with those most generally neglected that I am least imperfectly acquainted; but it was not so then, as you may suppose. Before I went to Mr. S——'s I certainly had never betrayed any very studious disposition; the ordinary and hacknied method of construing, and parsing, and learning by heart, and making themes, whose only possible excellence was to be unoriginal, and verses, in which the highest beauty was a dextrous plagiarism;—all this had disgusted me betimes, and I *shirked* lessons with the same avidity as the rest of my tribe. It became suddenly different with Mr. S——. The first day of my arrival, I *took up* the Medea of Euripides. Into what a delightful recreation did S—— manage to convert the task I had hitherto thought so wearisome,—how eloquently he dwelt on each poetical expression,—how richly he illustrated every beauty by comparisons and contrasts from the pages of other poets! What a life he breathed into the dull lecture! How glowingly, as if

touched by a wand, was the Greek crabbed sentence, hitherto breathing but of lexicons and grammars, exalted into the freshness and the glory of the poet! Euripides was the first of the divine spirits of old, who taught me to burn over the dreams of fiction; and so great and deep is my gratitude, that at this day I read his plays more often than I do even those of Shakspeare, and imagine that beauties speak to me from that little old worn edition, in which I then read him, that are dumb and lifeless to every heart but my own. I now studied with a new frame of mind: first, I began to admire—then to dwell upon what I admired—then to criticise, or sometimes to imitate. Within two years I had read and pondered over the works of almost all the Greek and Latin poets, historians, orators! the pages of the philosophers alone were shut to me. The divine lore of Plato, and the hard and grasping intellect of the Stagyrite, S—— did not undertake to decipher and expound. I except, indeed, those hacknied and petty portions of the latter, through which every orthodox

schoolman pushes his brief but unwilling way. You recollect that passage in Gibbon's Memoirs, in which he subjoins, with a pedant's pleasing ostentation, the list of the books he had read, I think, within a year. Judge of the gratification to my pride, when, chancing to meet with this passage, I found that my labours in this department had at least equalled those of the triumphant historian.

"I had been little more than a year with S——, and a fit, one bright spring morning, came over me—a fit of poetry. From that time the disorder increased, for I indulged it; and though such of my performances as have been seen by friendly eyes have been looked upon as mediocre enough, I still believe, that if ever I could win a lasting reputation, it would be through that channel. Love usually accompanies poetry, and, in my case, there was no exception to the rule.

"There was a slender, but pleasant brook, about two miles from S——'s house, to which one or two of us were accustomed, in the sum-

mer days, to repair to bathe and saunter away our leisure hours. To this favourite spot I one day went alone, and crossing a field which led to the brook, I encountered two ladies, with one of whom, having met her at some house in the neighbourhood, I had a slight acquaintance. We stopped to speak to each other, and I saw the face of her companion. Alas! were I to live ten thousand lives, there would never be a moment in which I could be alone—nor sleeping, and that face not with me!

"My acquaintance introduced us to each other. I walked home with them to the house of Miss D—— (so was the strange, who was also the younger, lady named). The next day I called upon her. The acquaintance thus commenced did not droop; and, notwithstanding our youth—for Lucy D—— was only seventeen, and I nearly a year younger—we soon loved, and with a love, which, full of poesy and dreaming, as from our age it necessarily must have been, was not less durable, nor less heart-felt, than if it had arisen from the deeper and more

earthly sources from which later life draws its affections.

"O God! how little did I think of what our young folly entailed upon us! We delivered ourselves up to the dictates of our hearts, and forgot that there was a future. Neither of us had any ulterior design; we did not think —poor children that we were—of marriage, and settlements, and consent of relations. We touched each other's hands, and were happy; we read poetry together—and when we lifted up our eyes from the page, those eyes met, and we did not know why our hearts beat so violently; and at length, when we spake of love, and when we called each other Lucy and ——; when we described all that we thought in absence—and all we had felt when present—when we sat with our hands locked each in each —and at last, growing bolder, when in the still and quiet loneliness of a summer twilight we exchanged our first kiss, we did not dream that the world forbade what seemed to us so natural; nor —feeling in our own hearts the impossibility of

change—did we ever ask whether this sweet and mystic state of existence was to last for ever!

"Lucy was an only child; her father was a man of wretched character. A profligate, a gambler—ruined alike in fortune, hope, and reputation, he was yet her only guardian and protector. The village in which we both resided was near London; there Mr. D—— had a small cottage, where he left his daughter and his slender establishment for days, and sometimes for weeks together, while he was engaged in equivocal speculations—giving no address, and engaged in no professional mode of life. Lucy's mother had died long since, of a broken heart—(that fate, too, was afterwards her daughter's)—so that this poor girl was literally without a monitor or a friend, save her own innocence—and, alas! innocence is but a poor substitute for experience. The lady with whom I had met her had known her mother, and she felt compassion for the child. She saw her constantly, and sometimes took her to her own house, whenever she was in the neighbourhood; but

that was not often, and only for a few days at a time. Her excepted, Lucy had no female friend.

"Was it a wonder, then, that she allowed herself to meet me?—that we spent hours and hours together?—that she called me her only friend—her brother as well as her lover? There was a peculiarity in our attachment worth noticing. Never, from the first hour of our meeting to the last of our separation, did we ever say an unkind or cutting word to each other. Living so much alone—never meeting in the world—unacquainted with all the tricks, and doubts, and artifices of life, we never had cause for the jealousy and the reproach, the sharp suspicion, or the premeditated coquetry, which diversify the current of loves formed in society—the kindest language, the most tender thoughts, alone occurred to us. If any thing prevented her meeting me, she never concealed her sorrow, nor did I ever affect to chide. We knew from the bottom of our hearts that we were all in all to each other—and there was

never any disguise to the clear and full understanding of that delicious knowledge. Poor—poor Lucy! what an age seems to have passed since that time! How dim and melancholy, yet, oh! how faithful, are the hues in which that remembrance is clothed! When I muse over that time, I start, and ask myself if it was real, or if I did not wholly dream it—and, with the intenseness of the dream, fancy it a truth. Many other passages in my life have been romantic, and many, too, coloured by the affections. But this short part of my existence is divided utterly from the rest—it seems to have no connexion with all else that I have felt and acted—a strange and visionary wandering out of the living world — having here no being and no parallel.

"One evening we were to meet at a sequestered and lonely part of the brook's course, a spot which was our usual rendezvous. I waited considerably beyond the time appointed, and was just going sorrowfully away when she appeared. As she approached, I saw that she was in tears

—and she could not for several moments speak for weeping. At length I learned that her father had just returned home, after a long absence—that he had announced his intention of immediately quitting their present home and going to a distant part of the country, or—perhaps even abroad.

"And this chance so probable, so certain—this chance of separation had never occurred to us before! We had lived in the Happy Valley, nor thought of the strange and desert lands that stretched beyond the mountains around us! I was stricken, as it were, into torpor at the intelligence. I did not speak, or attempt, for several moments, to console her. At length we sat down under an old tree, and Lucy it was who spoke first. I cannot say whether Lucy was beautiful or not, nor will I attempt to describe her; for it has seemed to me that there would be the same apathy and triteness of heart necessary, to dwell coldly upon that face and figure—which are now dust—as it would ask in a bridegroom widowed ere the first intoxication was

over, to minute and item every inch and article in his bridal chamber. But putting her outward attractions wholly aside, there was something in Lucy's sweet and kind voice which would have filled me with love, even for deformity; and now, when quite forgetting herself, she thought only of comfort and hope for me, my love to her seemed to grow and expand, and leave within me no thought, no feeling, that it did not seize and colour. It is an odd thing in the history of the human heart, that the times most sad to experience are often the most grateful to recall; and of all the passages in our brief and chequered love, none have I clung to so fondly or cherished so tenderly, as the remembrance of that desolate and tearful hour. We walked slowly home, speaking very little, and lingering on the way—and my arm was round her waist all the time. Had we fixed any scheme—formed any plan for hope?—none! We were (and felt ourselves—nor struggled against the knowledge) —we were playthings in the hands of Fate. It

is only in after-years that Wisdom (which is the gift of Prophecy) prepares us for, or delivers us from, Destiny! There was a little stile at the entrance of the garden round Lucy's home, and sheltered as it was by trees and bushes, it was there, whenever we met, we took our last adieu —and there that evening we stopped, and lingered over our parting words and our parting kiss—and at length, when I tore myself away, I looked back and saw her in the sad and grey light of the evening still there, still watching, still weeping! What, what hours of anguish and gnawing of heart must one, who loved so kindly and so entirely as she did, have afterwards endured!

"As I lay awake that night, a project, natural enough, darted across me. I would seek Lucy's father, communicate our attachment, and sue for his approbation. We might, indeed, be too young for marriage—but we could wait, and love each other in the meanwhile. I lost no time in following up this resolution. The next day,

before noon, I was at the door of Lucy's cottage —I was in the little chamber that faced the garden, alone with her father.

" A boy forms strange notions of a man who is considered a scoundrel. I was prepared to see one of fierce and sullen appearance, and to meet with a rude and coarse reception. I found in Mr. D—— a person who early accustomed —(for he was of high birth)—to polished society, still preserved, in his manner and appearance, its best characteristics. His voice was soft and bland; his face, though haggard and worn, retained the traces of early beauty; and a courteous and attentive ease of deportment had been probably improved by the habits of deceiving others, rather than impaired. I told our story to this man, frankly and fully. When I had done, he rose; he took me by the hand; he expressed some regret, yet some satisfaction, at what he had heard. He was sensible how much peculiar circumstances had obliged him to leave his daughter unprotected; he was sensible, also, that from my birth and future fortunes, my affec-

tion did honour to the object of my choice. Nothing would have made him so happy, so proud, had I been older—had I been my own master. But I and he, alas! must be aware that my friends and guardians would never consent to my forming any engagement at so premature an age, and they and the world would impute the blame to him; for calumny (he added in a melancholy tone) had been busy with his name, and any story, however false or idle, would be believed of one who was out of the world's affections.

" All this, and much more, did he say; and I pitied him while he spoke. Our conference then ended in nothing fixed;—but—he asked me to dine with him the next day. In a word, while he forbade me at present to recur to the subject, he allowed me to see his daughter as often as I pleased: this lasted for about ten days. At the end of that time, when I made my usual morning visit, I saw D—— alone: he appeared much agitated. He was about, he said, to be arrested. He was undone for ever—and

his poor daughter!—he could say no more—his manly heart was overcome, and he hid his face with his hands. I attempted to console him, and inquired the sum necessary to relieve him. It was considerable; and on hearing it named, my power of consolation I deemed over at once. I was mistaken. But why dwell on so hacknied a topic, as that of a sharper on the one hand, and a dupe on the other? I saw a gentleman of the tribe of Israel—I raised a sum of money, to be repaid when I came of age, and that sum was placed in D——'s hands. My intercourse with Lucy continued; but not long. This matter came to the ears of one who had succeeded my poor aunt, now no more, as my guardian. He saw D——, and threatened him with penalties, which the sharper did not dare to brave. My guardian was a man of the world; he said nothing to me on the subject, but he begged me to accompany him on a short tour through a neighbouring county. I took leave of Lucy only for a few days as I imagined. I accompanied my guardian—was a week absent—returned—

and hastened to the cottage: it was shut up—an old woman opened the door—they were gone, father and daughter, none knew whither!

"It was now that my guardian disclosed his share in this event, so terribly unexpected by me. He unfolded the arts of D——; he held up his character in its true light. I listened to him patiently, while he proceeded thus far; but when, encouraged by my silence, he attempted to insinuate that Lucy was implicated in her father's artifices—that she had lent herself to decoy, to the mutual advantage of sire and daughter, the inexperienced heir of considerable fortunes, my rage and indignation exploded at once. High words ensued. I defied his authority—I laughed at his menaces—I openly declared my resolution of tracing Lucy to the end of the world, and marrying her the instant she was found. Whether or not that my guardian had penetrated sufficiently into my character to see that force was not the means by which I was to be guided, I cannot say; but he softened from his tone at last—apologized for his warmth—con-

descended to soothe and remonstrate—and our dispute ended in a compromise. I consented to leave Mr. S——, and to spend the next year, preparatory to my going to the university, with my guardian: he promised, on the other hand, that if, at the end of that year, I still wished to discover Lucy, he would throw no obstacles in the way of my search. I was ill-contented with this compact; but I was induced to it by my firm persuasion that Lucy would write to me, and that we should console each other, at least, by a knowledge of our mutual situation and our mutual constancy. In this persuasion, I insisted on remaining six weeks longer with S——, and gained my point; and that any letter Lucy might write might not be exposed to officious intervention from S——, or my guardian's satellites, I walked every day to meet the postman who was accustomed to bring our letters. None came from Lucy. Afterwards, I learned that D——, whom my guardian had wisely bought, as well as intimidated, had intercepted three letters which she had addressed to me in her unsuspecting confidence—and that she only

ceased to write when she ceased to believe in me.

"I went to reside with my guardian. A man of a hospitable and liberal turn, his house was always full of guests, who were culled from the most agreeable circles in London. We lived in a perpetual round of amusement; and my uncle, who thought I should be rich enough to afford to be ignorant, was more anxious that I should divert my mind than instruct it. Well, this year passed slowly and sadly away, despite of the gaiety around me; and, at the end of that time, I left my uncle to go to the University; but I first lingered in London to make inquiries after D——. I could learn no certain tidings of him, but heard that the most probable place to find him was a certain gaming-house in K—— Street. Thither I repaired forthwith. It was a haunt of no delicate and luxurious order of vice; the chain attached to the threshold indicated suspicion of the spies of justice; and a grim and sullen face peered jealously upon me before I was suffered to ascend the filthy and

noisome staircase. But my search was destined to a brief end. At the head of the *Rouge et Noir* table, facing my eyes the moment I entered the evil chamber, was the marked and working countenance of D——.

" He did not look up—no, not once, all the time he played: he won largely—rose with a flushed face and trembling hand—descended the stairs—stopped in a room below, where a table was spread with meats and wine—took a large tumbler of Madeira, and left the house. I had waited patiently—I had followed him with a noiseless step—I now drew my breath hard, clenched my hands, as if to nerve myself for a contest—and as he paused for a moment under one of the lamps, seemingly in doubt whither to go—I laid my hand on his shoulder, and uttered his name. His eyes wandered with a leaden and dull gaze over my face before he remembered me. *Then* he recovered his usual bland smile and soft tone. He grasped my unwilling hand, and inquired with the tenderness of a

parent after my health. I did not heed his words. 'Your daughter?' said I, convulsively.

"'Ah! you were old friends,' quoth he, smiling; 'you have recovered that folly, I hope. Poor thing! she will be happy to see an old friend. You know, of course——'

"'What?'—for he hesitated.

"'That Lucy is married!'

"'Married!' and as that word left my lips, it seemed as if my very life, my very soul, had gushed forth also in the sound. When—oh! when, in the night-watch and the daily yearning, when, whatever might have been my grief or wretchedness, or despondency, when had I dreamt, when imaged forth even the outline of a doom like this? Married! my Lucy, my fond, my constant, my pure-hearted, and tender Lucy! Suddenly, all the chilled and revolted energies of my passions seemed to re-act, and rush back upon me. I seized that smiling and hollow wretch with a fierce grasp. 'You have done this—you have broken her heart—you

have crushed mine! I curse you in her name and my own! I curse you from the bottom, and with all the venom, of my soul! Wretch! wretch!' and he was as a reed in my hands.

"'Madman,' said he, as at last he extricated himself from my gripe, 'my daughter married with her free consent, and to one far better fitted to make her happy than you. Go, go—I forgive you—I also was once in love, and with *her* mother!'

"I did not answer—I let him depart.

"Behold me now, then, entered upon a new stage of life—a long, sweet, shadowy train of dreams and fancies, and forethoughts of an unreal future, was for ever past. I had attained suddenly to the end of that period which is as a tale from the East, 'a tale of glory and of the sun.' A startling and abrupt truth had come upon me in the night, and unawares! I was awakened, and for ever—the charm had fallen from me; and I was as other men! The little objects of earth—the real and daily present—the routine of trifles—the bustle and the con-

test—the poor employment and the low ambition—these were henceforth to me as to my fellow-kind. I was brought at once into the actual world; and the armour for defence was girded round me as by magic; the weapon adapted to the hardship and to the battle was in my hand. And all this had happened—love—disappointment—despair—wisdom—while I was yet a boy!

"It wàs a little while after this interview—but I mention it now, for there is no importance in the quarter from which I heard it—that I learned some few particulars of Lucy's marriage. There was, and still is, in the world's gossip, a strange story of a rich, foolish man, awed as well as gulled by a sharper, and of a girl torn to a church with a violence so evident that the priest refused the ceremony. But the rite was afterwards solemnized by special licence. The pith of that story has truth, and Lucy was at once the heroine and victim of the romance. Now, then, I turn to a somewhat different strain in my narrative.

"You, A——, who know so well the habits of a University *life*, need not be told how singularly monotonous and contemplative it may be made to a lonely man. The first year I was there, I mixed, as you may remember, in none of the many circles into which that curious and motley society is split. I formed, or rather returned to, my passion for study; yet the study was desultory, and wanted that system and vigour, on which you have, at a later time, complimented my lettered ardour. Two or three books, of a vague and unmellowed philosophy, fell in my way, and I fed upon their crude theories. We live alone, and we form a system; we go into the world, and we see the errors in the systems of others. To judge and to invent are two opposite faculties, and are cultivated by two opposite modes of life, or, as Gibbon has expressed it, 'Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius.'

"My only recreation was in long and companionless rides; and in the flat and dreary

country around our University, the cheerless aspect of nature fed the idle melancholy at my heart. In the second year of my college life, I roused myself a little from my seclusion; and rather by accident than design, you will remember that my acquaintance was formed among the men considered most able and promising of our time. I appeared but to poor advantage among these young academicians, fresh as they were from public schools; their high animal spirits for ever on the wing;—ready in wit and in argument—prone now to laugh at trifles, and now earnestly to dispute on them—they stunned and confused my quiet and grave habits of mind. I have met the most brilliant of these men since, and they have been astonished, and confessed themselves astonished, even at the little and meagre reputation I have acquired, and at whatsoever conversational ability, though only by fits and starts, I may now display. They compliment me on my improvement: they mistake—my intellect is just the same—I have improved only in the

facility of communicating its fruits. In the summer of that year, I resolved to make a bold effort to harden my mind and conquer its fastidious reserve; and I set out to travel over the north of England, and the greater part of Scotland, in the humble character of a pedestrian tourist. Nothing ever did my character more solid good than that experiment. I was thrown among a thousand varieties of character; I was continually forced into bustle and action, and into *providing for myself*—that great and indelible lesson towards permanent independence of character.

"One evening, in an obscure part of Cumberland, I was seeking a short cut to a neighbouring village through a gentleman's grounds, in which there was a public path. Just within sight of the house, (which was an old, desolate building, in the architecture of James the First, with gable-ends and dingy walls, and deep-sunk, gloomy windows,) I perceived two ladies at a little distance before me; one seemed in weak and delicate health, for she walked slowly and

with pain, and stopped often as she leaned on her companion. I lingered behind, in order not to pass them abruptly; presently, they turned away towards the house, and I saw them no more. Yet that frail and bending form, as I too soon afterwards learned—that form, which I did not recognise—which, by a sort of fatality, I saw only in a glimpse, and yet for the last time on earth,—that form—was the wreck of Lucy D——!

"Unconscious of this event in my destiny, I left that neighbourhood, and settled for some weeks on the borders of the lake of Keswick. There, one evening, a letter, re-directed to me from London, reached me. The hand-writing was that of Lucy; but the trembling and slurred characters, so different from that graceful ease which was wont to characterise all she did, filled me, even at the first glance, with alarm. This is the letter—read it—you will know, then, what I have lost.

"'I write to you, my dear, my unforgotten

———, the last letter this hand will ever trace. Till now, it would have been a crime to write to you; perhaps it is so still—but dying as I am, and divorced from all earthly thoughts and remembrances, save yours, I feel that I cannot quite collect my mind for the last hour until I have given you the blessing of one whom you loved once; and when that blessing is given, I think I can turn away from your image, and sever willingly the last tie that binds me to earth. I will not afflict you by saying what I have suffered since we parted—with what anguish I thought of what *you* would feel when you found me gone—and with what cruel, what fearful violence, I was forced into becoming the wretch I now am. I was hurried, I was driven, into a dreadful and bitter duty—but I thank God that I have fulfilled it. What, what have I done, to have been made so miserable throughout life as I have been! I ask my heart, and tax my conscience—and every night I think over the sins of the day; they do not seem to me heavy, yet my penance has been very great.

For the last two years, I do sincerely think that there has not been one day which I have not marked with tears. But enough of this, and of myself. You, dear, dear L——, let me turn to you! Something at my heart tells me that you have not forgotten that once we were the world to each other, and even through the changes and the glories of a man's life, I think you will not forget it. True, L——, that I was a poor and friendless, and not too-well educated girl, and altogether unworthy of your destiny; but you did not think so then—and when you have lost me, it is a sad, but it is a real comfort, to feel that that thought will never occur to you. Your memory will invest me with a thousand attractions and graces I did not possess, and all that you recall of me will be linked with the freshest and happiest thoughts of that period of life in which you first beheld me. And this thought, dearest L——, sweetens death to me—and sometimes it comforts me for what has been. Had our lot been otherwise—had we been united, and had you survived your love for me,

and what more probable!) my lot would have been darker even than it has been. I know not how it is—perhaps from my approaching death—but I seem to have grown old, and to have obtained the right to be your monitor and warner. Forgive me, then, if I implore you to think earnestly and deeply of the great ends of life; think of them as one might think who is anxious to gain a distant home, and who will not be diverted from his way. Oh! could you know how solemn and thrilling a joy comes over me as I nurse the belief, the certainty, that we shall meet at length, and for ever! Will not that hope also animate you, and guide you unerring through the danger and the evil of this entangled life?

" 'May God bless you, and watch over you—may He comfort and cheer, and elevate your heart to Him! Before you receive this, *I* shall be no more—and my love, my care for you will, I trust and feel, have become eternal. Farewell:

'L. M.'

"The letter," continued L——, struggling with his emotions, "was dated from that village through which I had so lately passed; thither I repaired that very night—Lucy had been buried the day before! I stood upon a green mound, and a few, few feet below, separated from me by a scanty portion of earth, mouldered that heart which had loved me so faithfully and so well!"

"O God! what a difference throughout the whole of this various and teeming earth a single DEATH can effect! Sky, sun, air, the eloquent waters, the inspiring mountain-tops, the murmuring and glossy wood, the very

'Glory in the grass, and splendour in the flower,'

do these hold over us an eternal spell? Are they as a part and property of an unvarying course of nature? Have they aught which is unfailing, steady—*same* in its effect? Alas! their attraction is the creature of an accident. One gap, invisible to all but ourself, in the crowd and turmoil of the world, and every thing is changed. In a single hour, the whole pro-

cess of thought, the whole ebb and flow of emotion, may be revulsed for the rest of an existence. Nothing can ever seem to us as it did: it is a blow upon the fine mechanism by which we think, and move, and have our being—the pendulum vibrates aright no more—the dial hath no account with time—the process goes on, but it knows no symmetry or order; it was a single stroke that marred it, but the harmony is gone for ever!

"And yet I often think that that shock which jars on the *mental*, renders yet softer the *moral* nature. A death that is connected with love unites us by a thousand remembrances to all who have mourned: it builds a bridge between the young and the old; it gives them in common the most touching of human sympathies; it steals from nature its glory and its exhilaration, but not its tenderness. And what, perhaps, is better than all, to mourn deeply for the death of another, loosens from ourself the petty desire for, and the animal adherence to, life. We have gained the end of the philosopher, and view, without shrinking, the coffin and the pall.

"For a year my mind did not return to its former pursuits: my scholastic ambition was checked at once. Hitherto I had said, 'If I gain distinction, *she* will know it:' *now*, that object was no more. I could not even bear the sight of books: my thoughts had all curdled into torpor—a melancholy listlessness filled and oppressed me—the *truditur dies die*—the day chasing day without end or profit—the cloud sweeping after cloud over the barren plain—the breath after breath passing across the unmoved mirror—these were the sole types and images of my life. I had been expected by my friends to attain some of the highest of academical rewards; you may imagine that I deceived their expectations. I left the University and hastened to London. I was just of age. I found myself courted, and I plunged eagerly into society, The experiment was perilous; but in my case it answered. I left myself no time for thought: gambling, intrigue, dissipation, these are the occupations of polished society; they are great resources to a wealthy mourner. The 'man'

stirred again within me; the weakness of my re-pinings gradually melted away beneath the daily trifles of life; perpetual footsteps, though the footsteps of idlers, wore the inscription from the stone. I said to my heart, 'Why mourn when mourning is but vanity, and to regret is only to be weak? let me turn to what life has left, let me struggle to enjoy.'

"Whoever long plays a part, ends by making it natural to him. At first I was ill at ease in feigning attention to frivolities; by degrees frivolities grew into importance. Society, like the stage, gives rewards intoxicating in proportion as they are immediate: the man who has but to appear behind the lamps of the orchestra to be applauded, must find all other species of fame distant and insipid; so with society. The wit and the gallant can seldom covet praise, which, if more lasting, is less *present* than that which they command by a word and a glance. And having once tasted the *éclat* of social power, they cannot resist the struggle to preserve it. This, then, grew my case. and it did me good,

though it has done others evil. I lived then my summer day,—laughed, and loved, and trifled with the herd. The objects I pursued were petty, it is true—but to have *any* object was to reconcile myself to life. And now the London season was over: summer was upon us in all its later prodigality. I was no longer mournful, but I was wearied. Ambition, as I lived with the world, again dawned upon me. I said, when I saw the distinction mediocrity had acquired, 'Why content myself with satirizing the claim?—why not struggle against the claimant?' In a word, I again thirsted for knowledge and coveted its power. Now comes the main history of *the Student*;—but I have fatigued you enough for the present.

CONVERSATION THE FIFTH.

THE HISTORY OF L—— CONTINUED IN HIS INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS—HELVETIUS—HIS FAULTS AND MERITS—THE MATERIALISTS—THE PHILOSOPHY OF FAITH.

"It was observed by Descartes," said L——, (as we renewed, a day or two after our last conversation, the theme we had then begun,) "'that in order to improve the mind, we ought less to learn than to contemplate.' In this sentence lies the use of retirement. There are certain moments when study is peculiarly grateful to us: but in no season are we so likely to profit by it, as when we have taken a breathing-time from the noise and hubbub of the world when the

world has wearied us. Behold me, then, within a long day's journey from London, in a beautiful country, an old house, and a library collected with great labour by one of my forefathers, and augmented in more modern works at the easy cost of expense, by myself.

"The first branch of letters to which I directed my application was Moral Philosophy; and the first book I seized upon was Helvetius. I know no work so fascinating to a young thinker as the 'Discours de l'Esprit:' the variety, the anecdote, the illustration, the graceful criticism, the solemn adjuration, the brilliant point that characterise the work, and render it so attractive, not as a treatise only, but a composition, would alone make that writer delightful to many who mistake the end of his system, and are incapable of judging its wisdom in parts.

"His great metaphysical error is in supposing all men born with the same capacity; in resolving all effects of character and genius to education. For, in the first place, the weight of proof being thrown upon him, he does not prove the

fact; and, secondly, if he did prove it, neither we nor his system would be a whit the better for it: for the utmost human and possible care in education cannot make all men alike;* and whether a care above humanity could do so, is, I apprehend, of very little consequence in the eyes of practical and sensible beings. Yet even this dogma has been beneficial, if not true: for the dispute it occasioned, obliged men to examine, and *to allow* the wonders that education *can* effect, and *the general* features in common which a common mode of education can bestow upon a people;—grand truths, to which the hu-

* For chance being included in Helvetius's idea of education, and, indeed, according to him (Essay iii. Chap. i.) "making the greatest share of it," it is evident that we must agree in what he himself almost immediately afterwards says, viz.—" That no persons being placed exactly in the same circumstances, no persons *can* receive exactly the same education"—*id est*, no persons can be exactly the same—the question then is reduced to a mere scholastic dispute. As long as both parties agree that no persons *can* be made exactly the same, it matters very little from what quarter comes the impossibility.

man race will owe all that is feasible in its progress towards amelioration! But, passing from this point, and steering from the metaphysical to the more plainly moral portion of his school, let us see whether he has given to that most mystical word VIRTUE its true solution. We all know the poetical and indistinct meanings with which the lofty soul of Plato, and the imitative jargon of his followers, clothed the word—a symmetry, a harmony, a beautiful abstraction, invariable, incomprehensible—that is the Platonic virtue. Then comes the hard and shrewd refining away of the worldly school. 'What is virtue here,' say they, 'is vice at our antipodes; the laws of morals are arbitrary and uncertain—

'Imposteur à la Mecque, et prophète à Médine;'*

there is no permanent and immutable rule of good; virtue is but a dream.' Helvetius is the first who has not invented, but rendered popular, this great, this useful, this all-satisfying interpretation, 'Virtue is the habitude of directing

* Voltaire, Mahomet, Let. i.

our actions to the public good; the love of virtue is but the desire of the general happiness; virtuous actions are those which contribute to that happiness.' In this clear and beautiful explanation all contradictions are solved: actions may be approved in one country, condemned in another, yet this interpretation will remain unchanged in its truth. What may be for the public good in China, may not be so in the Hebrides; yet, so long as we consult the public good wheresoever we are thrown, our intentions are virtuous. We have thus, in every clime, one star always before us; and, without recurring to the dreams of Plato, we are not driven, by apparent inconsistencies, to find virtue itself a dream. 'The face of Truth is not less fair and beautiful for all the counterfeit visors which have been put upon her.'" *

A. And it is from this explanation of the end of virtue that Bentham has deduced his definition of the end of government. Both tend to the public good; or, in yet broader terms, the

* Shaftesbury.

greatest happiness of the greatest number. It is a matter worthy of much pondering, to think that the end of virtue and the end of good government can only have the same explanation.

L. Yes; and hence a surpassing merit in Helvetius!—more than any reasoner before him, he united public virtues with private. Though so excellent, so exemplary himself, in the minor charities and graces of life, he forbore, like egotistical preachers, to dwell upon *them:* they are less important to mankind than the great principles of public conduct—principles which rule states and enlighten them. It was a noble truth at that time, the father of how much that is inestimable now, to proclaim, "that, in order to perfectionize our moral state, legislators had two methods: the first, to unite private interests to the general interest; the other, to advance the progress and diffusion of intellect." This is a maxim the people should wear in their hearts.

A. True; before Helvetius, moralists were in league with the ills that are: they preached to man to amend himself, not to amend his laws,

without which all amelioration is partial. To what use would it be to tell the modern Greeks not to lie? Give them a code, in which, to lie would be to sin against self-interest.

L. The form of government gives its tone to popular opinion. It is in proportion as popular opinion honours or neglects a virtue, that that virtue is popularly followed. In commercial countries wealth is respectability; in despotic countries flattery is considered wisdom: the passions lead men to action, and the passions are excited according to the reward proposed to them. These are grave and weighty truths: we are to thank Helvetius if they are now known.

A. But I have diverted you from the thread of your narrative. To what new studies did your regard for Helvetius direct you?

L. It did not immediately lead to new studies, but gave a more solid direction to those I had formerly indulged. I had, as I mentioned, been before addicted to abstract speculation; but it was of a dreamy and wild cast. I now sought to establish philosophy on the basis of common

sense. I recommenced, then, a stern and resolute course of metaphysical study, giving, indeed, a slighter attention to the subtleties which usually occupy the student, than to the broader principles on which the spirit of human conduct and our daily actions do secretly depend. Moral philosophy is the grandest of all sciences: metaphysics, abstracted from moral philosophy, is at once the most pedantic and the most frivolous. And that man is indeed delirious "qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera."

But I soon grew chilled and dissatisfied with the materialists. Helvetius charmed my fancy—sharpened my intellect—but filled not my soul. Locke, Condillac, alike left me disappointed—and asking solutions to questions which they either dared not answer—or discouragingly evaded. Then came the Scotch, and, (so far as they were open to me,) the German reasoners, with their far more ennobling systems—the wild and starry darkness of the last—the generous ardour—the prodigal and earnest faith that distinguishes the first. But I could not shut my eyes to

hair-splitting and refining — the quackery
fanaticism of the one — the haste, the
ıess, the illogical intemperance, of the
r. Even Plato, with all his dreams, seem-
o me more conclusive, than these, his
t, imitators. Left then by my guides upon
vast and illimitable plain—awe-struck and
ened by my own doubts, I resolved, at least,
o despair,—for suddenly I felt that I was not
! My books were deaf and sealed, but
d me was the Universe, and the life of
;s became my teacher!—Yes—not from me-
ysics, but from *analogy* I rebuilt up my
ıbling faith,—and became a Philosopher to
lf. Happy he whose doubts resolve them-
s as mine did, into that devout, confiding,
ıterial hope, which seems to suit best our
ed lore below—to support most our virtue,
exalt our souls. Some men there are of
minds, of long-practised self-denial, of
s whose austerity has become a pleasure—
may be both good and happy without a be-
n an Hereafter. Lowlier than these, I own

myself one amongst the herd. And never did I feel assured of the strength of my own heart, and trustful to subdue its human errors and its hourly sorrows, until I saw bright before me the birthright and Eden of Immortality. There is a Philosophy, attempted, it is true, but yet unattained—a Philosophy which this century ought to produce out of the ashes of the Materialism of the last—it is the Philosophy of Faith!"



CONVERSATION THE SIXTH.

THE HISTORY CONCLUDED—PROGRESS FROM MORALS TO HISTORY—A STATE OF DOUBT MOST FAVOURABLE TO THE STUDY OF THE PAST—PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORIANS DANGEROUS—HUME AND GIBBON—THE ADVANTAGES OF TACITUS AND POLYBIUS IN ACTUAL EXPERIENCE—BOLINGBROKE THE FIRST ENGLISH UTILITARIAN—HISTORY THE ACCUSER OF MANKIND—THE GREEKS—PORTRAIT OF THEMISTOCLES—PATRIOTISM AND PHILANTHROPY—THE ERRORS OF OLD—THE DIVINE HOPE OF THE FUTURE.

"Slowly and reluctantly," continued L——, (resuming the next day the thread of his intellectual history,) "did I turn from the consideration of motives to that of actions—from Morals to History. Volney has said, in his excellent lectures, that the proper state of mind for the examination of history, is that in which we 'hold the judgment in suspense.' This truth is evident; yet they who allow the doctrine when

couched in the above phrase, might demur if the phrase were a little altered, and instead of a suspension of judgment, we spoke of a *state of doubt.* It is true! in this state, a state of 'investigating doubt,' history *should* be studied. In doubt, all the faculties of the mind are aroused—we sift, we weigh, we examine—every page is a trial to the energies of the understanding. But confidence is sleepy and inert. If we make up our minds beforehand to believe all we are about to read, the lecture glides down the memory without awakening one thought by the way. We may be stored with dates and legends; we may be able to conclude our periods by a fable about Rome; but we do not feel that we have reasoned as well as read. Our minds may be fuller, but our intellects are not sharper than they were before; we have studied, but not investigated:—to what use investigation to those who are already persuaded? There is the same difference in the advantage of history to him who weighs, because he mistrusts, and to him who discriminates nothing, because he believes all,

as there is between the value of a common-place book and a philosophical treatise. The first may be more full of facts than the latter, but the latter is facts turned to use. It is this state of rational doubt which a metaphysical course of study naturally induces. It is, therefore, *after* the investigation of morals, that we should turn to history. Nor is this all the advantage which we derive from the previous study of morals. History were, indeed, an old almanack to him who knows neither what is right nor what is wrong; where governments have been wise, where erroneous. History, regarded in the light of political utility, is, to quote Volney again, 'a vast collection of moral and social experiments, which mankind make involuntarily and very expensively on themselves.' But we must know the principles of the science before we can apply the experiments."

A. And yet, while the real uses of history are philosophical, a mere narrator of facts is often far better than a philosophical historian.

L. Because it is better to reflect ourselves

than to suffer others to reflect for us. A philosopher has a system; he views things according to his theory; he is unavoidably partial; and, like Lucian's painter, he paints his one-eyed princes in profile.

A. It is especially in our language that the philosophical historians have been most dangerous. No man can give us history through a falser medium than Hume and Gibbon have done.

L. And this not only from the occasional inaccuracy of their facts, but their general way of viewing facts. Hume tells the history of factions, and Gibbon the history of oligarchies—the People, the People, are altogether omitted by both. The fact is, neither of them had seen enough of the mass of men to feel that history should be something more than a chronicle of dynasties, however wisely chronicled it be: they are fastidious and graceful scholars; their natural leanings are towards the privileged elegances of life: eternally sketching human nature, they give us, perhaps, a skeleton tolerably accurate—it is the

flesh and blood they are unable to accomplish: their sympathies are for the courtly—their minds were not robust enough to feel sympathies with the undiademed and unlaurelled tribes: each most pretends to what he most wants—Hume, with his smooth affectation of candour, is never candid—and Gibbon, perpetually philosophizing, is rarely philosophical.

A. Tacitus and Polybius are not easily equalled.

L. And why? Because both Tacitus and Polybius had seen the world in more turbulent periods than our historians have done; the knowledge of their kind was not lightly printed, but deeply and fearfully furrowed, as it were, upon their hearts; their shrewd, yet dark wisdom, was the fruit of a terrible experience. Gibbon boasts of the benefit he derived to his History from his military studies in the militia; it was from no such holiday service that Polybius learned *his* method of painting wars. As the Megalopolitan passed through his stormy and bold career; as he took rough lessons from the

camp, and imbued himself with the cold sagacity which the diplomatic intrigues he shared both required and taught, he was slowly acquiring that mass of observation, that wonderful intuition into the true spirit of facts, that power of seeing at a glance the Improbable, and through its clouds and darkness seizing at once upon the True, which characterise the fragments of his great history, and elevate, what in other hands would have been but a collection of military bulletins, into so inestimable a manual for the statesman and the civilian. And, when we glance over the life of the far greater Roman, we see no less palpably how much the wisdom of the closet was won by the stern nature of those fields of action in which he who had witnessed the reign of a Domitian was cast. When we grow chained to his page by the gloomy intenseness of his colourings—when crime after crime, in all the living blackness of those fearful days, arises before us—when in his grasping aphorisms the fierce secrets of kings lie bared before us—when in every sentence we shudder at

a record—in every character we mark a portent, yet a mirror, of the times, we feel at once how necessary to that force and fidelity must have been the severity and darkness of his experience. Through action, toil, public danger, and public honours, he sought his road to philosophy, a road beset with rapine and slaughter; every slave that fell graved in his heart a warning, every horror he experienced animated and armed his genius. Saturate with the spirit of his age, his page has made that age incarnate to posterity —actual, vivified, consummate, and entire. If, indeed, it be dread and ghastly, it is the dread and ghastliness of an unnatural life. Time has not touched it with a charnel touch. The Magician has preserved the race in their size and posture;—motionless, breathless,—in all else, unchanged as in life.

A. It is a great loss to our language that Bolingbroke never fulfilled what seems to have been the intention of his life and the expectation of his friends—viz. the purpose so often alluded to in his Letters, of writing a History.

L. Yes; from all he has left us, he seems to have been pre-eminently qualified for the task: his thoughts so just, yet so noble; his penetration into men so keen; his discernment of true virtue so exact!

A. He gave, certainly, its loftiest shape to the doctrine of Utility, and is the real father of that doctrine in England.*

L. Returning from these criticisms on historians to the effect which History produces, I cannot but think that its general effect tends to harden the heart against mankind. Its experience, so long, so consistent, so unvarying, seems a silent and irresistible accuser of the human species. Men have taken the greatest care to preserve their most unanswerable vilifier. All forms of government, however hostile to each other, seem alike in one effect—the general baseness of the governed. What differs the boasted Greece from the contemned Persia?—the former

* The Utilitarians have quite overlooked their obligations to Lord Bolingbroke. They would not acknowledge a leader in a Tory.

produces some hundred names which the latter cannot equal. True! But what are a few atoms culled from the sea-sands?—what a few great men to the happiness of the herd? Are not the Greek writers, the Greek sages, more than all others, full of contempt for the mass around them?—the fraud, the ingratitude, the violence, the meanness, the misery of their fellow-beings—do not these make the favourite subject of ancient satire and ancient declamation? And even among their great men, how few on whose merits History can at once decide! —how few unsullied, even by the condemnation of their own time. Plutarch says that the good citizens of Athens were the best men the world ever produced; but that her bad citizens were unparalleled for their atrocities, their impiety, their perfidy. Let us look over even the good citizens Plutarch would select, and, judging them by the rules of their age, how much have the charitable still left to forgive! Were I to select a personification of the Genius of Athens, I would choose Themistocles; a great warrior and a

wise man, resolute in adversity, accomplished in expedients, consummate in address. Reverse the portrait: he begins his career by the most unbridled excesses; he turns from them, it is said —to what?—to the grossest flattery of the multitude: the people whom he adulates at first, he continues to rule by deceiving; he has recourse to the tricks and arts of superstition to serve the designs and frauds of ambition.* As an evidence how little the wisdom of the chiefs had descended to the deliberations of the people, viz.—how little the majority profited by their form of government—we find it recorded that when an Athenian orator argued a certain point too closely with Themistocles—the people stoned him, and the women stoned his wife. So much for free discus-

* When he was chosen admiral by the Athenians, he put off all affairs public and private, to the day that he was about to embark, in order that he might appear, in having a vast deal of business to transact, with a greater dignity and importance.—It is quite clear that all the business thus deferred, must have been very badly done, and thus a trick to preserve power was nobler and better in his eyes than a care for the public advantage.

sion among the ancients. He governs professedly as a quack. He thinks first of destroying his allies, and, baffled in that, contents himself with plundering them. Not naturally covetous, he yet betrays his host (Timocreon, the Rhodian) for money. Vain, as well as rapacious, he lavishes in ostentation what he gains by meanness. Finally—"linking one virtue with a thousand crimes"—he completes his own character and consummates the illustration he affords of the spirit of his country, by preserving to the last (in spite of his hollow promises of aid to the Barbarian, in spite of his resentment) his love to his native city—a passion that did not prevent error, nor baseness, nor crime, exerted in her cause—but prevented all hostility against her. The most selfish, the most crafty, the most heartless of men, destroyed himself, rather than injure Greece.*

* These observations are too severe. L—— does not deal deeply enough with the Greek character, and he confides too much in the rhetorical exaggerations of Plutarch. But, withal, Themistocles was not an honest man.

A. Leaving his life a proof that patriotism is a contracted and unphilosophical feeling; it embraces but a segment of morals. Philanthropy is the only consistent species of public love. A patriot may be honest in one thing, yet a knave in all else—a philanthropist sees and seizes the *whole* of virtue.

L. And it is by philanthropy, perhaps, (a modern affection,) that we may yet add a more pleasing supplement to the histories of the past. This can alone correct the feeling of despair for human amendment, which history otherwise produces: we can, alas! only counteract the influence of past facts by recurring to the dreams of enthusiasts for the future; by clinging to some one or other of those dreams, and by a hope, that, if just, is at least unfounded on any example in former ages, that by the increase of knowledge, men will *approach* to that political perfection, which does not depend alone on the triumphs of art, or the advance of sciences—which does not depend alone on palaces, and streets, and temples, and a few sounding and solemn

names, but which shall be felt by the common herd, viz. by the *majority* of the people: felt by them in improved comfort; in enlightened minds; in consistent virtues; in effects, we must add, which no causes have hitherto produced. For why study the mysteries of Legislation and Government? Why ransack the past, and extend our foresight to distant ages? if our skill can only improve, as hitherto it has only improved, the condition of oligarchies; if it can only give the purple and the palace to the few—if it must leave in every state the degraded many to toil, to sweat, to consume the day in a harsh and sterile conflict with circumstance for a bare subsistence; their faculties dormant; their energies stifled in the cradle; strangers to all that ennobles, refines, exalts,—if at every effort to rise, they are encountered by a law, and every enterprise darkens with them into a crime; if, when we cast our eyes along the vast plains of life, we see but one universal Arena of Labour, bounded on all sides by the gibbet, the hulks, the wheel, the prison; all ignorance,

prejudice, bloodshed, sin;—if this state is to endure for ever on earth, why struggle for a freedom which few only can enjoy—for an enlightenment, which can but call forth a few luminous sparks from an atmosphere of gloom: for a political prosperity which props a throne, and gives steeds to a triumphal car, and animates the winged words of eloquence, or the golden tomes of verse, or the lofty speculation of science—and yet leaves these glories and effects but as fractions that weigh not one moment against the incalculable sum of human miseries? Alas! if this be the eternal doom of mortality, let us close our books, let us shut the avenues to our minds and hearts, let us despise benevolence as a vanity, and speculation as a dream. Let us play the Teian with life, think only of the Rose and Vine, and since our most earnest endeavours can effect so little to others, let us not extend our hopes and our enjoyments beyond the small and safe circle of Self! No: man must either believe in the perfectibility of his species, or virtue and the love of others, are but a heated and objectless enthusiasm.

A. And this belief, whether false or true, gains ground daily.

L. I must own that, until it broke upon me, I saw nothing in learning but despondency and gloom.—As clouds across the Heaven, darkening the light, and fading one after the other into air, seemed the fleeting shadows which Philosophy had called forth between the Earth and Sun. If, day after day, in my solitary retreat, I pondered over the old aspirations of sages, with the various jargon with which, in the pursuit of truth, they have disguised error, I felt that it was not to teach myself to be wise, but to learn to despair of wisdom. What a waste of our power—what a mockery of our schemes—seemed the fabrics they had erected—the Pythagorean Unity; and the Heraclitan Fire, to which that Philosopher of Woe reduced the origin of all things; and the "*Homoomeria*" and primitive "Intelligence" of Anaxagoras; and the Affinity and Discord of Empedocles, and the Atoms of Epicurus, and the bipart and pre-existent Soul which was evoked by Plato: was

there not something mournful in the wanderings and chimeras of these lofty natures?—fed as they were in caves and starry solitudes, and winged by that intense and august contemplation, which they of the antique world were alone able to endure. And when, by a sounder study, or a more fortunate train of conjecture, the erratic enterprise of their knowledge approached the truth—when Democritus, for a moment, and at intervals, eyes by a glimmering light the true courses of the Heavenly Host—or when Aristippus, amid the roseate and sparkling errors of his creed, yet catches a glimpse of the true doctrine of morals and the causes of human happiness,—or when the lofty Zeno and the sounder Epicurus, differing in the path, meet at length at the true goal—and then again start forth into delusion;—their very approach to truth so momentary and partial, only mocks the more the nature of human wanderings,—"caput ac fontem ignorant, divinant, ac delirant omnes."* Couple then the records of Philosophy with

* Erasmi Colloquia; Hedonius et Spudæus.

those of History; couple the fallacies of the wise with the sorrows and the sufferings of the herd, and how dark and mournful is our knowledge of the past, and therefore our prospects of the future! And how selfish does this sentiment render our ambition for the present! How vain seem the mighty struggle and small fruit of those around us! Look at this moment at the agitation and ferment of the world—with what pretence can they who believe that the Past is the mirror of the Future, lash themselves into interest for any cause or principle, save that immediately profitable to self! To them, if deeply and honestly acquainted with history and the progress of knowledge—to them how vain must seem the struggles and aspirations of the crowd! Why do the people imagine a vain thing? Why the hope and the strife of the rejoicing Gaul; or the slow murmur, that foretells irruption through the bright lands of Italy? Why should there be blood spilt in the Vistula? or why should the armed Belgian dispute for governments and Kings? Why agitate *ourselves*

for a name—an ideal good? These orations, and parchments, and meetings, and threats, and prayers—this clamour for "reform,"—how miserable a delusion must it seem to him who believes that the *mass* of men must for ever be "the hewers of wood and drawers of water!" To them no change raises the level of existence; famine still urges on to labour—want still forbids knowledge. What matters whether this law be passed, or that fleet be launched, or that palace built, their condition is the same; the happiest concurrence of accident and wisdom brings *them* but a greater certainty of labour. A free state does not redeem them from toil, nor a despotism increase it. So long as the sun rises and sets, so long must their bread be won with travail, and their life "be rounded" with the temptation to crime. It seems, therefore, to me, impossible for a wise and well-learned man to feel *sincerely*, and without self-interest, for the public good, unless he believe that laws and increased knowledge will at length, however gradually, devise some method of raising the

great multitude to a nearer equality of comfort and intelligence with the few; that human nature is capable of a degree of amelioration that it seems never hitherto to have reached; and that the amelioration will be felt from the surface to the depth of the great social waters, over which the spirit shall move. The Republics of old never effected this object. To expect it, society must be altered as well as legislation. It is for this reason that I feel glad with an ingenious and admirable writer,* that even theory is at work: I am glad that inquiry wanders, even to the fallacies of Owen, or the chimeras of St. Simon. Out of that inquiry good may yet come; and some future Bacon overturn the axioms of an old school, polluted, not redeemed, by every new disciple. To the man who finds it possible to entertain this hope, how different an aspect the world wears! Casting his glance forward, how wondrous a light rests upon the future! the farther he extends his vision, the

* The Author of Essays on the Publication of Opinion, &c.

brighter the light. Animated by a hope more sublime than wishes bounded to earth ever before inspired, he feels armed with the courage to oppose surrounding prejudice, and the warfare of hostile customs. No sectarian advantage, no petty benefit is before him; he sees but the Regeneration of Mankind. It is with this object that he links his ambition, that he unites his efforts and his name! From the disease, and the famine, and the toil around, his spirit bursts into prophecy, and dwells among future ages; even if in error, he luxuriates through life in the largest benevolence, and dies — if a visionary—the visionary of the grandest dream!



CONVERSATION THE SEVENTH.

DESCRIPTION OF AN ENGLISH LANDSCAPE—THE ANIMAL ENJOYMEN OF LIFE—SOLITARY PERSONS THE LEAST REPINING—COWLEY ON THE TOWN AND COUNTRY—L——'S MENTAL PROGRESS FROM HISTORY TO WORKS OF IMAGINATION—HE IS INSPIRED TO EMULATION, NOT BY THE FAME OF GENIUS, BUT BY THE LUXURY OF COMPOSITION—GENIUS IS PECULIARLY SUSCEPTIBLE OF ENJOYMENT — IT EVEN *ENJOYS* SADNESS—L——'S STUDIES INTERRUPTED.

It is a singularly pretty spot in which L—— resides. Perhaps some of the most picturesque scenery in England is in the neighbourhood of London; and as I rode the other day, in the later April, along the quiet lane, which branches from the main road to L——'s house—Spring never seemed to me to smile upon a lovelier prospect.

The year had broken into its youth as with a sudden and hilarious bound. A little while before, I had passed along the same road—all was sullen and wintry—the March wind had swept along dry hedges and leafless trees—the only birds I had encountered were two melancholy sparrows in the middle of the road—too dejected even to chirp; but now a glory had passed over the earth—the trees were dight in that delicate and lively verdure, which we cannot look upon without feeling a certain freshness creep over the heart. Here and there thick blossoms burst in clusters from the fragrant hedge, and (as a schoolboy prankt out in the hoops and ruffles of his grandsire) the whitethorn seemed to mock at the past winter by assuming its garb. Above, about, around—all was in motion, in progress, in joy—the birds, which have often seemed to me like the messengers from earth to heaven—charged with the homage and gratitude of Nature, and gifted with the most eloquent of created voices to fulfil the mission;—the birds were upon every spray, their music upon every

breath of air, Just where the hedge opened to the left, I saw the monarch of English rivers glide on his serene and silver course—and in the valley on the other side of his waters, village, spire, cottage, and (at rarer yet thick intervals) the abodes of opulence looked out among the luxuriant blossoms, and the vivid green by which they were encircled. It was a thoroughly English scene. For I have always thought that the peculiar characteristic of English scenery is a certain air of content. There is a happier smile on the face of an English landscape than I have ever beheld even in the landscapes of the South; a happier though a less voluptuous smile—as if Nature were more at home.

Presently I came to the turn of the lane which led at once to L——'s house—in a few minutes I was at the gate. Within, the grounds, though not extensive, have the appearance of being so—the trees are of great size, and the turf is broken into many a dell and hollow, which gives the lawn a wild and a park-like appearance. The house is quaint and old-fashioned (not Gothic

or Elizabethan) in its architecture; it seems to have been begun at the latter period of the reign of James the First, and to have undergone sundry alterations, the latest of which might have occurred at the time of Anne. The old brown bricks are three parts covered with jessamine and ivy, and the room in which L—— generally passes his day, looks out upon a grove of trees, amidst which, at every opening, are little clusters and parterres of flowers. And in this spot, half wood half garden, I found my friend, seduced from his books by the warmth and beauty of the day, seated on a rustic bench, and surrounded by the numerous dogs, which of all species and all sizes, he maintains in general idleness and favour.

"I love," said L——, speaking of these retainers, "like old Montaigne, to have animal life around me. The mere consciousness and sensation of existence is so much stronger in brutes than in ourselves, their joy in the common air and sun is so vivid and buoyant, that I (who think we should sympathise with all things, if we would but condescend to remark all things,)

feel a contagious exhilaration of spirits, in their openness to pleasurable perceptions. And how happy, in reality, the sentiment of life *is!*—how glorious a calm we inhale in the warm sun! —how rapturous a gladness in the fresh winds! —how profound a meditation and delight in the stillness of the 'starry time!'—how sufficient alone to make us happy is external nature, were it not for these eternal cares that we create for ourselves. Man would be happy but that he is forbidden to be so by men. The most solitary persons have always been the least repining."

A. But then their complacency arises from the stagnation of the intellect—it is indifference, not happiness.

L. Pardon me, I cannot think so. How many have found solitude not only, as Cicero calls it, the *pabulum* of the mind, but the nurse of their genius! How many of the world's most sacred oracles have been uttered like those of Dodona, from the silence of deep woods! Look over the lives of men of genius, how far the larger proportion of them have been passed in loneli-

ness. Now, for my part, I think solitude has its reward both for the dull and the wise;—the former are therein more sensible to the mere animal enjoyment which is *their* only source of happiness: the latter are not (by the irritation, the jealousy, the weariness, the round of small cares, which the crowd produces) distracted from that contemplation, and those pursuits, which constitute the chief luxury of their life and the *το καλον* of their desires. There is a feeling of escape, when a man who has cultivated his faculties rather in thought than action, finds himself, after a long absence in cities, returned to the *spissa nemora domusque Nympharum*, which none but himself can comprehend. With what a deep and earnest dilation Cowley luxuriates in that, the most eloquent essay perhaps in the language!—although, as a poet, the author of the Davideis was idolised far beyond his merits by a courtly audience, and therefore was not susceptible, like most of his brethren, of that neglect of the crowd which disgusts our hearts by mortifying our vanity. How calm, how august,

and yet how profoundly joyful is the vein with which he dwells on the contrast of the town and the country! "We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature. We are there among the pitiful shifts of policy. We walk here in the light and open ways of Divine bounty. We grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice!"

A. There is a zest even in turning from the harsher subjects, not only of life, but of literature, to passages like these! How these green spots of the poetry of sentiment soften and regenerate the heart!

L. And so, after wading through the long and dry details, which constitute the greater part of history, you may conceive the pleasure with which I next turned to that more grateful method of noting the progress of nations,—the history of their literature.

A. I thank you for renewing the thread broken off in our last conversation. We had been speaking of the reflections which history awakened in your mind. That necessary (and

yet how seldom an useful) study, was followed then by the relaxation of more graceful literature.

L. Yes, and in the course of this change, a singular effect was produced in my habits of mind. Hitherto I had read without much emulation. Philosophy, while it soothes the reason, damps the ambition. And so few among historians awaken our more lively feelings, and so little in history encourages us to pass the freshness of our years in commemorating details at once frivolous to relate and laborious to collect, that I did not find myself tempted by either study to compose a treatise or a record. But Fiction now opened to me her rich and wonderful world—I was brought back to early (and early are always aspiring) feelings—by those magical fascinations, which had been so dear to my boyhood. The sparkling stores of wit and fancy, the deep and various mines of poesy, stretched before me, and I was covetous! I desired to possess, and to reproduce. There is a Northern legend of a man who had resisted all the temp-

tations the earth could offer. The demon opened to his gaze the marvels beneath the earth. Trees effulgent with diamond fruits, pillars of gold, and precious stones, fountains with water of a million hues, and over all a floating and delicious music instead of air. The tempter succeeded:—envy and desire were created in the breast that had been calm till then. This weakness was a type of mine!—I was not only charmed with the works around me, but I became envious of the rapture which they who created them, must, I fancied, have enjoyed. I recalled that intense and all-glowing description which De Stael has given in her Essay on Enthusiasm, of the ecstasy which an author enjoys, not in the publication, but the production, of his work. Could Shakspeare, I exclaimed, have erected his mighty Temple to Fame, without feeling, himself, the inspiration which consecrated the shrine? Must he not have enjoyed, above all the rest of mankind, every laugh that rang from Falstaff, or every moral that came from the melancholy Jacques?

Must he not have felt the strange and airy rapture of a preternatural being, when his soul conjured up the Desert Island, the Caliban, and the Ariel? Must he not have been intoxicated with a gladness, lighter and more delicate, yet, oh, more exquisite and rich, than any which the harsh merriment of earth can father, when his fancy dwelt in the summer noon under the green boughs with Titania, and looked on the ringlets of the fairies, dewy with the kisses of the flowers? And was there no delight in the dark and weird terror with which he invoked the grisly Three, "so withered and so wild in their attire," who, in foretelling, themselves created, the bloody destinies of Macbeth?—So far from believing, as some have done, that the feelings of genius are inclined to sadness and dejection—it seemed to me *vitally necessary* to genius to be vividly susceptible to enjoyment. The poet in prose or verse—the Creator—can only stamp his images forcibly on the page in proportion as he has keenly felt, ardently nursed, and long brooded over them.

And how few among the mass of writings that float down to posterity are not far more impregnated with the bright colourings of the mind, than its gloomier hues! Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, Voltaire, Goëthe, Cervantes—and—perhaps, a lower grade—Scott, Fielding, Le Sage, Molière. What a serene and healthful cheerfulness, nay, what a quick and vigorous zest of life, are glowingly visible in all!—It is with a very perverted judgment that some have fastened on the few exceptions to the rule, and have asserted that the gloom of Byron or the morbidity of Rousseau, characterize not the individual, but the tribe. Nay, even in these exceptions, I imagine that, could we accurately examine, we should find, that the capacity to enjoy strongly pervaded their temperament, and made out of their griefs a luxury!—Who shall say whether Rousseau, breathing forth his 'Reveries,' or Byron tracing the Pilgrimage of 'Childe Harold,' did not more powerfully feel the glory of the task, than the sorrow it was to immortalize? Must they not have been exalted

with an almost divine gladness, by the beauty of their own ideas, the melody of their own murmurs, the wonders of their own art? Perhaps we should find that Rousseau did not experience a deeper pleasure, though it might be of a livelier hue, when he dwelt on his racy enjoyment of his young and pedestrian excursion, than when in his old age, and his benighted, but haunted mood, he filled the solitude with imaginary enemies, and bade his beloved lake echo to self-nursed woes.

You see then that I was impressed, erroneously or truly, with the belief, that in cultivating the imagination I should cultivate my happiness. I was envious, not so much of the *fame* of the ornaments of letters, as of the *enjoyment* they must have experienced in acquiring it. I shut myself in a closer seclusion, not to study the thoughts of others, but to embody my own. I had been long ambitious of the deepest hoards of learning. I now became ambitious of adding to the stores of a lighter knowledge.

A. And did you find that luxury in ideal reation which you expected?—

L. I might have done so, but I stopped short in my apprenticeship.—

A. And the cause?—

L. Why, one bright day in June, as I was sitting alone in my room, I was suddenly aroused from my reverie, by a sharp and sudden pain, that shot through my breast, and when it left me I fainted away. I was a little alarmed by this circumstance, but thought the air might relieve me. I walked out, and ascended a hill at the back of the house. My attention being now aroused and directed towards myself, I was startled to find my breath so short that I was forced several times to stop in the ascent. A low, short cough, which I had not heeded before, now struck me as a warning, which I ought to prepare myself to obey. That evening as I looked in the glass, for the first time for several weeks with any care in the survey, I perceived that my apprehensions were corroborated by the change in my appearance. My cheeks were fallen,

and I detected in the midst of their natural paleness, that hectic which never betrays its augury. I saw that my days were numbered, and I lay down on my pillow that night with the resolve to prepare for death. The next day when I looked over my scattered papers; when I saw the mighty schemes I had commenced, and recalled the long and earnest absorption of all my faculties, which even that commencement had required,—I was seized with a sort of despair. It was evident that I could now perform nothing great, and as for trifles, ought they to occupy the mind of one whose eye was on the grave?—There was but one answer to this question. I committed my fragments to the flames; and now there came, indeed, upon me a despondency I had not felt before. I saw myself in the condition of one, who, after much travail in the world, has found a retreat, and built a home, and who in the moment he says to his heart, "Now thou shalt have rest!" beholds himself summoned away. I had found an object—it was torn from me—my staff was broken, and it was only

left to me to creep to the tomb, without easing by any support the labour of the way. I had coveted no petty aim—I had not bowed my desires to the dust and mire of men's common wishes—I had bade my ambition single out a lofty end and pursue it by generous means. In the dreams of my spirit, I had bound the joys of my existence to this one aspiring hope, nor had I built that hope on the slender foundations of a young inexperience—I had learned, I had thought, I had toiled, before I ventured in my turn to produce. And now, between myself and the fulfilment of schemes, that I had wrought with travail, and to which I looked for no undue reward—there yawned the Eternal Gulf. It seemed to me as if I was condemned to leave life, at the moment I had given to life an object. There was a bitterness in these thoughts which it was not easy to counteract. In vain, I said to my soul, "Why grieve?—Death itself does not appal thee.—And after all, what can life's proudest objects bring thee better than rest?"—But we learn at last to conquer our destiny, by

surveying it; there is no regret which is not to be vanquished by resolve. And now, when I saw myself declining day by day, I turned to those more elevating and less earthly meditations, which supply us, as it were, with wings, when the feet fail. They have become to me dearer than the dreams which they succeeded, and they whisper to me of a brighter immortality than that of Fame.

CONVERSATION THE EIGHTH.

L——'S OCCASIONAL RESTLESSNESS AT THE THOUGHT OF DEATH—ANECDOTE OF THE LAST HOURS OF A MAN UNWILLING TO DIE—L——'S GRATITUDE THAT THE *GRADUAL* DECAY OF HIS POWERS PREPARES HIM FOR HIS END—CRITICISM ON THE "NIGHT THOUGHTS"—SURVEY OF CONTEMPORANEOUS POETRY—REMARKABLE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE BLANK VERSE AND RHYME OF THE SAME PERIOD—THE FORMER MORE ENGLISH—PECULIARITIES OF THE OLD ENGLISH MUSE—ITS QUAINT LOVE OF CLASSICAL ALLUSION—ITS MIXTURE OF THE GRAVE AND GAY—ITS MINUTENESS IN RURAL DESCRIPTION, &C.—POPE COMPARED WITH THOMSON; AKENSIDE WITH JOHNSON—YOUNG—HIS TENDENCY TO THE AMBITIOUS—THE VIEWS OF LIFE MORE GLOOMY IN THE GREEK THAN THE ROMAN POETS—THE ENGLISH MUSE RATHER ADOPTS THOSE OF THE FORMER—YOUNG EMBUED WITH OUR EARLIER POETRY—THE SUBLIMEST POETS ABOUND WITH THE HOMELIEST IMAGES—AND, IN MODERN LITERATURE, ALSO WITH THE MOST EXAGGERATED CONCEITS—YOUNG THEREFORE JUSTIFIED BY THEIR EXAMPLE IN HIS HOMELINESS AND QUAINTNESS—HIS SUBLIME POWER OF PERSONIFICATION—HIS TERSENESS—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RANK OF THE POET AND THAT OF THE POEM—THE GRANDEUR OF THE CONCEPTION OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS AS COMPARED WITH CHILDE

HAROLD AND OTHER DIDACTIC POEMS—THE POET'S CONCEPTION IS SUSTAINED THROUGHOUT — THE WISDOM OF HIS MAXIMS — THE BEAUTY OF HIS DICTION—CONCLUDING REMARKS ON YOUNG'S CHARACTER—APOLOGY FOR RETAILING L——'S CRITICISMS.

It is with a melancholy pleasure that I have been made sensible of the interest that these conversations have excited in the gentler and more thoughtful of the tribe of readers.* I have received more anonymous letters than I care to name, complaining of the long silence I have preserved, and urging me to renew Dialogues, already so often repeated, that I might well imagine (knowing how impatient the readers of a periodical generally are of subjects continued in a series) that they had sufficiently exhausted the indulgence of the public. To me individually, there is little that is flattering in any interest these papers may have created. I am but the echo of another; or, to use an old, yet still

* The reader will here remember that these dialogues first appeared in a detached shape in the New Monthly Magazine—there was an interval of several months (from May to November) between the appearance of the last and the following conversation.

graceful metaphor, I only furnish the string which keeps the flowers together. The reasons of my silence have been twofold. Amidst the strife and ferment of passing events, the thoughts and feelings, *the mental history*, of an individual seemed to fade into insignificance; and I deemed it fairer justice to L—— to reserve that history to calmer opportunities. If I must name another motive, I will frankly add, that I have not of late had the heart to proceed. Never more now—but no—I will not anticipate a story which, so far as events and incidents create interest, has so little to recommend it. The reader need fear no farther interruption. All that remains to relate is already prepared, and I have but to send it, portion by portion, to the press, until the whole is concluded,

"And the spell closes with its silent seal."

And now I saw L—— daily, for his disease increased rapidly upon him, and I would not willingly have lost any rays of that sun that was so soon to set for ever. Nothing creates within us so many confused and strange sentiments

as a conversation on those great and lofty topics of life or nature, which are rarely pleasing, except to Wisdom which contemplates, and Genius which imagines;—a conversation on such topics with one whose lips are about to be closed for an eternity. This thought impresses even common words with a certain sanctity; what, then, must it breathe into matters which, even in ordinary times, are consecrated to our most high-wrought emotions and our profoundest hopes?

I saw, then, L—— daily, and daily he grew more resigned to his fate; yet I cannot deny that there were moments when his old ambition would break forth—when the stir of the living world around him—when action, enterprise, and fame — spoke loudly to his heart;—moments when he wished to live on, and the deep quiet of the grave seemed to him chilling and untimely; and—reflect,—while we were conversing on these calm and unearthly topics, what was the great world about? Strife and agitation — the stern wrestle between topics that have been and the things to come—the vast upheavings of society—the revolution of mind that

was abroad—was not this felt, even to the solitary heart of that retirement in which the lamp of a bright and keen existence was wasting itself away!

"I remember," said L——, one evening, when we sate conversing in his study; the sofa wheeled round; the curtains drawn; the table set, and the night's sedentary preparations made; "I remember hearing the particulars of the last hours of an old acquaintance of mine, a lawyer, rising into great eminence in his profession—a resolute, hard-minded, scheming, ambitious man. He was attacked in the prime of life with a sudden illness; mortification ensued; there was no hope; he had some six or seven hours of life before him, and no more. He was perfectly sensible of his fate, and wholly unreconciled to it. 'Come hither,' he said to the physician, holding out his arm; (he was a man of remarkable physical strength;) 'Look at these muscles; they are not wasted by illness; I am still at this moment in the full vigour of manhood, and you tell me I must die!' He ground

his teeth as he spoke. 'Mark, I am not resigned; I will battle with this enemy;' and he raised himself up, called for food and wine, and died with the same dark struggles and fiery resistance that he would have offered in battle to some embodied and palpable foe. Can you not enter into his feelings? I can most thoroughly. —Yes," L—— renewed, after a short pause, "I ought to be deeply grateful that my mind has been filed down and conciliated to what is inevitable by the gradual decay of my physical powers; the spiritual habitant is not abruptly and violently expelled from its mansion; but the mansion itself becomes ruinous, and the inmate has had time to prepare itself for another. Yet when I see you all about me, strong for the race and eager for the battle—when, in the dead of a long and sleepless night, images of all I might have done, had the common date of life been mine, start up before me, I feel as a man must feel who finds himself suddenly arrested in the midst of a journey, of which all the variety of scene, the glow of enterprise, the triumph of

discovery, were yet to come. It is like the traveller who dies in sight of the very land that he has sacrificed the ease of youth and the pleasures of manhood to reach. But these are not the reflections I ought to indulge—let me avoid them. And where can I find a better refuge for my thoughts than in talking to you of this poem, which, long ago, we said we would attempt to criticize, and which of all modern works, gloomy and monotonous as it seems to men in the flush of life, offers the calmest and most sacred consolation to those whom Life's objects should no longer interest?"

A. You speak of "The Night Thoughts?" Ay, we were to have examined that curious poem, which has so many purchasers, and has been honoured with so few critics. Certainly, when we remember the day in which it appeared, and the poetry by which it has been succeeded, it is worthy of a more ample criticism than, with one exception, it has received.

"It is very remarkable," said L——, willingly suffering himself to sink into a more com-

mon-place vein, "how great a difference the spirit of poetry in the last century assumes, *when breathed through the medium of blank verse, and through that of rhyme.* In rhyme, the fashion of poetry was decidedly French, and artificial; polish, smoothness, point, and epigram are its prevailing characteristics; but in blank-verse, that noble metre, introduced by Surrey, and perfected by Shakspeare, the old genius of English poetry seems to have made a stubborn and resolute stand. In the same year that Pope produced 'The Dunciad,' appeared the 'Summer' of James Thomson. Two years prior to that, viz. 1726, the first published of the Seasons, 'Winter,' had been added to the wealth of English poetry, unnoticed at first, but singled out happily by perhaps the best critic of the day, Whately, and recommended by his, to more vulgar, admiration. 'The Seasons' is a thoroughly national poem, thoroughly English: not that Thomson, or that any English poet of great name, has entirely escaped the affectation of classical models; that affectation is indeed to

be found not the least frequently among those poets the most purely national. Nicholas Grimoald, the second English poet in blank verse after Surrey—a translator as well as poet—is a curious instance of the English spirit blended with the Latin school. Thus, in his poem on Friendship, the lines—

'Of all the heavenly gifts, that mortal men commend
What trusty treasure in the world can countervail a friend!
Our health is soon decayed, goods casual, light and vain,
Broke have we seen the force of power, and honour suffer stain!'

These lines, I say, are soon afterwards followed by references to Scipio and Lælius, and Cicero and Atticus; and, by the way, Theseus and Pirithous, or, as he is pleased to abbreviate the latter name, *Pirith*, are thus made the vehicle to one of those shrewd hits of quaint, odd satire which the old poets so loved to introduce—

'Down Theseus went to hell,
Pirith, his friend, to find;
Oh that the wives, in these our days,
Were to their mates as kind!'

"So, in short, through all the long series of English poets — through those preceding Elizabeth—Vaux, Sackville—even the homely Tusser in his 'Five Hundreth poyntes of good Husbandrie,' (certainly as English and as rural a poem as possible,)—fly with peculiar avidity to ancient times for ornaments and allusions the most unseasonable and ostentatious. The grace and elegance of Elizabeth's age were no preventives to the same perversion of taste; Christianity and Mythology, knight-errantry and stoicism, Gothic qualities and Roman names, all unite together in the most exulting defiance of reason and common-sense;—'The Arcadia,' (a poem, if Telemachus has rightly been called a poem,) of the polished Sidney is the most arabesque of all these mixtures of poetical architecture;—Shakspeare does not escape the mania; Marlowe plunges into it; Ben Jonson, with all his deep learning, and certainly correct taste, portrays his own age most faithfully, but covers the dress with Roman jewellery. The *taste* continued; the sanctity of Milton's theme, and

the rigidity of his religious sect, sufficed not to exclude from his venerable page—

'Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train.'

The gods of old are translated to sees in the modern Hell—

'Titan, heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood and birthright seized
By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found :
So Jove usurping reigned—these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled !'

Even in the Hebrew Paradise—

'The universal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Leads on the eternal Spring !'

The climax of beauty in Raphael's appearance, is that—

'Like Maia's son he stood.'

And "the Eternal" himself borrows Homer's scales, to decide upon the engagement between fiend and angel—

'Golden scales yet seen
Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign.'

We all know how much the same classic adulterations mingle with the English Helicon at a later period; how little even the wits of the time of Charles the Second escape the hereditary taint. Sedley's mistresses are all Uranias and Phillises. Now he borrows a moral from Lycophron, and next he assures us, in one of the prettiest of his songs that—

> 'Love still has something of the sea
> From whence his mother rose.'

Dryden, whose excellence never lay in an accurate taste, though in his admirable prose writings he proves that he knew the theory while he neglected the practice, is less painfully classical and unseasonably mythological than might have been expected; and as from his time the school of poetry became more systematically copied from a classical model, so it became less eccentric in its classical admixtures. Pope is at once the most Roman * of all our poets, and the least offensive in his Romanism. I mention all this to prove, that when we find much that is borrowed, and often awkwardly

* And the least Greek.

borrowed, from ancient stores, ancient names, and ancient fables, in those poets of the last century, whom I shall take the licence to call pre-eminently English, we must not suppose that they are, from that fault, the less national; nay, that very aptitude to borrow, that very tendency to confuse their present theme with the incongruous ornaments of a country wholly opposite from our own, *are almost, on the contrary, a testimony how deeply they were imbued with that spirit which belonged to the most genuine of their predecessors.*

"Among the chief characteristics of our English poetry, are great minuteness and fidelity in rural description—a deep melancholy in moral reflection, coupled with a strong and racy aptitude to enjoy the sweets of life as well as to repine at the bitters—a glowing richness, a daring courage, of expression, and a curious love of abrupt change in thought and diction; so that the epigrammatic and the sublime, the humorous and the grave, the solemn and the quaint, are found in a juxtaposition the most

singular and startling; as much the reverse of the severe simplicity of the true ancient schools as possible, and having its resemblance, and that but occasionally, and in this point alone, in the Italian.*

"In the middle of the last century, the three greatest of the poets in blank-verse are Akenside, Thomson, and Young. Of these three, the last I consider the *most* thoroughly English in his muse; but, with the exception of that love of blending extremes, which I have noted before, the two former are largely possessed of the great features of their national tribe. Pope's pastorals were written at so early an age that it would not be fair to set them in comparison with 'Thomson's Seasons' had Pope's descriptions of scenery ever undergone any change in their spirit and conception, in proportion as he added to the correct ear of his youth—the bold turn, the exquisite taste, the

* Critics not acquainted with our early literature have imagined this mixture of grave and gay the offspring of late years, nay, some have actually attributed its origin in England to Byron's imitations from the Italian.

incomparable epigram, and even (witness the prologue to 'Cato') the noble thought and the august image, which adorn the poetry of his maturer years; but however Pope improved in all else, his idea, his notion of rural description always remained pretty nearly the same—viz. as trite as it could be. And this, an individual failing, was the failing also of his school—the eminent failing of the French school to this very day. Well then, Pope having fixed upon Autumn as the season of a short pastoral, chooses 'tuneful Hylas' for his songster, and telling us first, that—

> 'Now setting Phœbus shone serenely bright,
> And fleecy clouds were strewed with purple light;'

'Tuneful Hylas' then, thus

> 'Taught rocks to weep and made the mountains groan.'

> 'Now bright Arcturus glads the teeming grain,
> Now golden fruits on loaded branches shine,
> And grateful clusters swell with floods of wine;
> Now blushing berries paint the yellow grove,
> Just gods! shall all things yield returns but love?'

"These lines are very smooth, and for the

age at which they were composed, surprisingly correct. They are as good, perhaps, as any thing in "Les Jardins' of Delille, but there is not a vestige of *English* poetry in them—not a vestige. Thomson would not have written them at any age, and Pope would only have polished them more had he written them when he published the 'Dunciad,' *i.e.* as I said before, in the same year in which Thomson published the 'Summer.' But thus begins the poet of the 'Seasons' with *his* 'Autumn.'

> 'Crowned with the sickle, and the wheaten sheaf,
> While Autumn nodding o'er the yellow plain,
> Comes jovial on . . . . .
> * * * * *
> . . . . broad, brown, below
> Extensive harvests hang the heavy head,
> *Rich, silent, deep they stand!* for not a gale
> Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain,
> *A calm of plenty!'* . . . . .

Again, how fine what follows! Wordsworth is not more true to Nature. He speaks of the Autumn fogs—

> . . . . . 'Expanding far
> The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain,

Vanish the woods—the dim seen river seems
Sullen and slow to roll the misty wave,
Even in the height of noon opprest, the sun
Sheds weak . . . . .
. . . . . Indistinct on earth,
Seen through the tumid air, beyond the life
Objects appear; and wildered o'er the waste
The shepherd stalks gigantic—till at last
Wreathed dun around, in deeper circles still
Successive, closing sits the general fog
Unbounded o'er the world, and mingling thick,
A formless grey confusion covers all.'

This is *description* !—and this is national !—this is English !—albeit it was the Tweed,

'Whose pastoral banks first heard *that* Doric reed.'

"Again too, in another vein—that inclination to stoop from the grave to the low—which, as I have hinted, is less frequently displayed in Thomson than in Young (in Akenside, it is scarcely, if at all, noticeable)—this is English. A fox-hunter's debauch,—

'Set ardent in
For serious drinking, ...
* * * * *
. . . . . confused above
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,

As if the table even itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene, and wide below
Is heaped the social slaughter, where astride
The lubber power in filthy triumph sits, ... &c.
Perhaps some doctor *of tremendous paunch,*
Awful and deep, *a black abyss of drink,*
Outlives them all!' &c.

"These are passages, which (mixing the serious with the burlesque) would be rarely found in the same poem in any other language than ours—and the spirit that pervades blank verse, such as this, is altogether different from that which reigned over the contemporaneous rhymes of the day. It breathes of life, of action, of the open air, of the contemplative walk in the fields at eve, or the social hearth at night. But the genius of rhyme lived in London—talked with courtiers—made love and witticisms in a breath—'babbled about green fields' in a dusty closet—and when it walked into print it was never without a bag-wig and a sword.

"The 'Seasons' were completed in 1730. Fourteen years afterwards appeared Akenside's 'Pleasures of Imagination:' it is a great poem;

but Akenside's habits of mind—his pedantry and stiffness—were not well adapted to the subject he chose. There is a straining and labour about his verse as if it were the offspring rather of the Pains than the Pleasures of Imagination. His love of Latin composition tends also to unanglicize his diction. Thus his poem is infinitely too scholastic, and certainly neither in vigour or richness of expression, in close description, in sublimity, in terseness, in avoidance of cold generalities, is he to be put on a par with Thomson or Young. But still if you compare his blank verse with his own rhyme, or with that of Johnson's 'London,' (which, though I do not remember the exact date it was published, must have appeared some six or seven years before,) you find the native muse more visible, more at liberty in the blank verse, than the other and more crippled metre. I mention Johnson in particular, for the genius of both was scholastic and didactic. Both thought of the Ancients—the one copied from Juvenal, the other imagined from Lucretius. The passages I shall

quote from each are strictly classical. But one is of the old English race of classical description—it breathes of Spenser and of Milton—the other was the anti-national, the new, the borrowed, the diluted, the classical description, which steals the triteness of old, without its richness. One takes the dress—the other the jewels. Thus Johnson:—

> 'Couldst thou resign the park and play, content,
> For the fair banks of Severn or of Trent;
> There mightst thou find some elegant retreat,
> Some hireling senator's deserted seat,
> And stretch thy prospects o'er the smiling land,
> For less than rent the dungeons of the Strand;
> There prune thy walks, support thy drooping flowers,
> Direct thy rivulets, and twine thy bowers,
> And while thy grounds a cheap repast afford,
> Despise the dainties of a venal lord;
> There every bush with nature's music rings,
> There every breeze bears health upon its wings:
> On all thy hours security shall smile,
> And bless thine evening walk, and morning toil.'

"Now then for Akenside. He has burst into an apostrophe on Beauty (with Johnson it would have been Venus!) and after asking whether She will fly—

'With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic Isles,'

the poet adds—

'Or wilt thou ráther stoop thy vagrant plume
Where, gliding through his daughter's honoured shades,
The smooth Peneus from his glassy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene—
Fair Tempe!—haunt beloved of sylvan powers
Of Nymphs and Fauns, where in the golden age
They played in secret on the shady brink
With antient Pan. While round their *choral* steps
Young hours and genial gales with constant hand
Showered blossoms, odours, showered ambrosial dews,
And Spring's elysian bloom!'

"Here all is classic—antique—Grecian—it might be a translation from Euripides. But how different the life in this page, to the cold resuscitation of dry bones in Johnson! Johnson, who despised the fine ballads which make the germ of all that is vivid and noble in our poetry, could not have comprehended the difference between the genuine antique and the mock. They both have filled their vases from the old fountain '*splendidior vitro*;' but the vase of one is the

Etruscan shape—and that of the other is a yellow-ware utensil from Fleet Street. But now, having somewhat prepared ourselves by the short survey—retrospective and contemporaneous—that we have thus taken of English poetry, we come at once to Young—a man whose grandeur of thought, whose sublimity of expression, whose wonderful power of condensing volumes into a line, place him, in my opinion, wholly beyond the reach of any of his contemporaries, and enable him to combine the various and loftiest characteristics of prose and verse;—enable him to equal now a Milton in the imperial pomp of his imagery, and now a Tacitus in the iron grasp of his reflection."

A. There seems to have been in Young's mind a remarkable turn towards the Ambitious. His poetry and his life equally betray that loftiness of desire and straining after effect—which both in composition and character we term ambitious.

L. It is rather a curious anecdote in literary history, that the austere Young should have

attempted to enter Parliament under the auspices of that profligate bankrupt of all morality, public and private, Philip Duke of Wharton. Had he succeeded—what difference might it have made not only in Young's life but in his character! Is it not on the cards that the grandest of all theological poets, (for neither Milton nor Dante are in reality theological poets, though they are often so called,) might have become, in that vicious and jobbing age of parliamentary history, a truckling adventurer or an intriguing placeman?

A. The supposition is not uncharitable when we look to his after-life, and see his manœuvres for ecclesiastical preferment. For my own part I incline to suspect that half the sublime melancholy of the poet proceeded from the discontent of the worldling.

L. It is certainly possible that not even the loftiest sentiments—the fullest mind—the most devout and solemn fervour of religion, may suffice to chase away the poor and petty feelings that in this artificial world fasten themselves around

the heart, and are often the base causes of the most magnificent efforts of genius. The blighting of a selfish ambition produced the Gulliver of Swift—and possibly also deepened the ebon dyes of the verse of Young. A morbid discontent—an infirmity of constitution—breathed its gloom into the "Rasselas" of Johnson, and the "Childe Harold" of Byron. When the poet flies, after any affliction in the world, to his consolatory and absorbing art, he is unaware that that affliction which inspires him is often composed of the paltriest materials. So singular and complex, in short, are the sources of inspiration, so completely and subtly are the clay and the gold moulded together, that, though it may be a curious metaphysical pleasure to analyse, and weigh, and sift, the good and the evil therein, it is not a task that it is very wise in us to undertake. Let us drink into our souls the deep thought and lofty verse of Lucretius, without asking what share belonged to the philtre and what to the genius.

We may remark that the contemplation ex-

hibited in the poetry of the Ancients turns usually towards a gay result, and sighs forth an Epicurean moral—the melancholy is soft, not gloomy, and brightens up at its close.

> "........... Vina liques, et spatio brevi
> Spem longam reseces; dum loquimur, fugerit invida
> Ætas; carpe diem quàm minimùm credula postero."

Life is short—while we speak it flies—enjoy then the present and forget the future—such is the chief moral of ancient poetry, a graceful and a wise moral—indulged beneath a southern sky, and well deserving the phrase applied to it—"the philosophy of the garden"—telling us of the brief and fleeting life of the flowers that surround us, only to encourage us to hang over their odours while we may. But it must be observed that this, the more agreeable, shape of melancholy is more remarkable among the Romans than the Greeks. Throughout the various philosophies of the latter the dark and saddening doctrine of an irresistible Fate flows like a bitter stream;—and an unrelieved and heavy de-

spondency among the less popular of the remains of Greek poesy often comes in startling contrast with the gayer wisdom of that more commonly admired. Turn from Anacreon to the fragments of Mimnermus, collected by Stobæus—it is indeed turning from the roses to the sepulchre beneath. "Life is short—we learn from the Gods neither evil nor good—the black fates are before us—death and old age at hand. Not one among mortals whom Jupiter heaps not with afflictions," &c. It is chiefly from this more sombre order of reflection that the English contemplative writers deduce their inspiration. Lord Sackville, in the "Mirror of Magistrates," may furnish no inadequate notion of the exaggerating extent to which we have carried despondency. He therein represents Sorrow in Hell, introducing the reader to the principal characters in our history! With our earlier writers Young was intimately acquainted and deeply imbued. But of all great poets his plagiarisms are the least naked. Drummond says—

> "This world a hunting is;
> The prey poor man—the Nimrod fierce is death."

And Young at once familiarizes and exalts the image—

> "I see the circling hunt of noisy men
> Burst law's enclosure, leap the mounds of right,
> Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey—
> Till Death, that mighty Hunter, earths them all."

The love of common and daily images is very remarkable in Young; but when we come to examine the works of the greater poets, we shall generally be surprised to find that those poets who abound in the most lofty and far-fetched images, invariably furnish also the most homely. It is the genius in whom we miss the one that avoids the other. We may be quite sure when we open Shakspeare that the sublimest metaphor will be in the closest juxtaposition with what in any one else we should not hesitate to call the most vulgar—

> "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time:
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death—*Out—out, brief candle!*"

It is too much the cry to accuse Young, as a

peculiarity in his genius, of being too bombastic, and turgid, and peregrinate in his metaphors —fond of conceits and addicted to exaggeration. Doubtless he is so; but as the man in the play exclaims—" Your great geniuses can never say a thing like other people"—and it certainly is noticeable, though common-place or uninvestigating critics have said the contrary, that *in all modern literature it is the loftiest order of genius that will furnish examples of the most numerous exaggerations and the most grotesque conceits.* Among the Italians we all know how prevalent they are. Even the cold rules of the French drama do not banish them, and Corneille still, beyond all comparison the grandest of the French poets, is also the most addicted to extravagances.

" Ma plus douce espérance est de perdre l'espoir"*

is one among a thousand. You recollect, of course, those extravagances which Addison selects from Milton, and the many others in that

* The Cid.

great poet which Addison did not select; in short, when we blame Young for a want of strict taste in his metaphors, we blame him for no fault peculiar to himself, but one which he shares with the greatest poets of modern times in so remarkable a degree that it almost seems a necessary part of their genius. And I am not quite certain whether, after all, it is they, or we the critics, who are in the wrong. I think that had a list of their conceits been presented to Milton and to Young, they would have had a great deal to say in their defence. Certainly, by the way, Dr. Johnson, in his hasty and slurring essay on Young's poetry, has not been fortunate in the instances of conceits which he quotes for reprobation. For example, he says of a certain line applied to Tyre in Young's Merchant—"Let burlesque try to go beyond him." The line is this—

"Her Merchants Princes and *each deck a throne!*"

It is at least doubtful whether the words that seem so ridiculous to Johnson, do not, on the

contrary, body forth a very bold and fine image; and it is quite certain that the critic might have selected at least a hundred far more glaring specimens of conceit or tumidity. One great merit in Young, and also one great cause of his exaggerations is his habit of embodying feelings, his fondness of personifying. For instance;—

> "My Hopes and Fears
> Start up alarmed, and o'er life's narrow verge
> Look down—on what? a fathomless abyss."

This vivifying the dread inmates of the human heart, and giving the Dark Invisible a shape and action, is singularly fine in the above passage. Again:—

> "Thought—busy Thought——too busy for my peace—
> Through the dark postern of Time long elapsed,
> Led softly by the stillness of the night,
> Led like a murderer ......
> ...... meets the Ghosts
> Of my departed joys."

There is here a dim and sepulchral life breathed into the Thought that wanders and the Joys it meets, that belongs only to the highest order of

creative poetry; and sometimes a few lines testifying of this sublime power, will show as prolific and exuberant an invention as that which calls forth the beings of the Drama and the Epic—as the Greeks often conveyed their most complicated similes in one epithet. It is scarcely possible to conceive a more solemn and impressive example of this faculty than where afterwards he calls his sorrow itself into a separate existence, and says—

> "Punctual as Lovers to the moment sworn
> *I keep an assignation with my Woe.*"

But if this great proneness to personify produces so much that is the greatest in Young—it produces also that which criticism condemns as the lowest. For instance, you will smile at the following verses:

> " ——— Who can take
> Death's portrait true—*the Tyrant never sat.*"
> * * * * *
> * * * * *
> " Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field,
> Converse the *manège* breaks it to the bit.

* * * * *
* * * * *

.... He 's at the door,
Insidious Death—should his strong hand *arrest*,
No composition sets the prisoner free."

It is the same habit of personification which, I think, on looking over Milton and Shakspeare, you will find mainly produce the same fault (if fault it really be) in them.

That power of the Greeks to which I have alluded of conveying the most complicated images by a *word*, belongs also to Young in a greater degree than to any poet *since* his time. As where he exclaims—

" Much wealth how little worldlings can enjoy;
At best it *babies* us with endless toys."

And again—a finer instance—

" Mine" *(joys)* " died with thee, Philander; thy last sigh
Dissolved the charm; the disenchanted earth
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers,
Her golden mountains where? all darkened down
To naked waste—a dreary vale of years.—
The great *Magician* 's dead!"

Here the whole contents of the preceding lines—the whole power of friendship—the whole victory of death, are summed up at once in the words

> "The great MAGICIAN 's dead !"

Nothing, indeed, throughout the whole poem is more remarkable in Young than his power of condensation. He gathers up a vast store ot thought, and coins the whole into one inestimable sentence. He compresses the porosities of language, and embodies a world of meaning in a single line. And it is indeed remarkable, that a writer possessing this power to so unrivalled a degree, should ever subject himself with justice to the charge of tumidity.

But what place in our literature is to be assigned to Young? At present, his position is vague and uncertain. Like many other of our poets, his merits are acknowledged, but his station undecided. Shall we place him before Pope? Pope's admirers would be startled at the presumption. Below Goldsmith? Few

would assert the "Deserted Village" to be a greater poem than the "Night Thoughts." What is his exact rank? I confess that I should incline to place it on a very lofty eminence. In a word, I should consider the "Night Thoughts," altogether, the finest didactic poem in the language. The greatest orders of poetry, we all allow, are the epic and the dramatic. I am at a loss to say whether, *in general*, lyrical or didactic poetry should be placed next; but I am sure that, *in our country*, didactic poetry takes the precedence. None of our lyrists have equalled our great didactic writers; and with us, the order itself of lyrical writing seldom aspires beyond the graceful. But it must be understood that there is sometimes a great difference between the rank of the poem and that of the poet; many writings of great excellence can pile up a higher reputation than one work of the greatest. Both Voltaire and Scott depend, not only on the quality but the quantity of their productions, for their fame. When the public were crying out that the author of "Waverley"

was writing too much and too fast, they did not perceive that even his inferior works contributed to swell the sum of his glory, by proving the fertility of his genius. And to him may be well applied the words applied to another—"he would not have effected such great things, if his errors had been less numerous." So, although I consider the "Night Thoughts" a poem entitled to rank immediately below the "Paradise Lost," I am far from contending that Young should rank as a poet immediately next to Milton. I think the "Night Thoughts" a more sustained, solemn, and mighty poem than the "Childe Harold;" but when I recall all the works that accompany the latter—produce of the same fiery and teeming mind—the dark tale of "Lara"—the sweetness of the "Prisoner of Chillon"—the daring grandeur of "Cain," and, above all, the rich, nervous humour—the deep mastery of the living world that breathes a corporeal life into the shadows of the "Don Juan," I willingly allow Byron to be a greater genius, and a greater poet, than Young.

A. But you really think the "Night Thoughts" finer than "Childe Harold."

L. So much so, that I doubt if the finest parts of "Childe Harold"—the most majestic of its reflections, and the most energetic of its declamations—are not found in those passages which have been (perhaps indistinctly and unconsciously) borrowed from Young. The fault of the "Childe Harold" is as a whole. There is no grandeur in its conception. Every novel in the Minerva Press furnishes a similar idea of the hero and the plan. A discontented young nobleman, sated and jaded, setting out on his travels — turn the conception as you will, it comes always to that, in plain and sober reality. But this poor and hacknied conception the Poet has hid in so magnificent a robe, and decorated with such a costly profusion of gems, that it matters little to the delight and interest of the reader. Still, in judging of it as a great poem, we must remember, that in the most important part of a great poem, it is deficient. But the conception of the "Night

Thoughts," for a didactic poem, is unutterably grand. An aged and bereaved mourner stands alone with the dead—the grave his scene—the night his canopy—and time, death, eternity-the darkest, the loftiest objects of human hope and human intellect, supply his only themes. Here, in this spot, and at this hour, commencing his strain with a majesty worthy of its aims and end, he calls upon

> " Silence and Darkness, solemn sisters, twins
> From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
> To Reason, and on Reason build Resolve,
> That column of true majesty in man!
> Assist me: I will thank you in the grave—
> The grave, your kingdom———"

Following the course of the sombre inspiration that he adjures, he then passes in a vast review before him, in the presence of the Stars, and above the slumbers of the dead, the pomps and glories of the world—the veiled and shadowy forms of Hope—the dim hosts of Memory—

> " The Spirit walks of each departed Hour,
> And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns—"

Standing upon the grave—the creations of two worlds are round him, and the grey hairs of the mourner become touched with the halo of the prophet. It is the time and spot he has chosen wherein to teach us, that dignify and consecrate the lesson: it is not the mere human and earthly moral that gathers on his tongue. The conception hallows the work, and sustains its own majesty in every change and wandering of the verse. And there is this greatness in his theme —dark, terrible, severe—Hope never deserts it! It is a deep and gloomy wave, but the stars are glassed upon its bosom. The more sternly he questions the World, the more solemnly he refers its answer to Heaven. Our bane and antidote are both before him; and he only arraigns the things of Time before the tribunal of Eternity. It is this, which, to men whom grief or approaching death can divest of the love and hankerings of the world, leaves the great monitor his majesty, but deprives him of his gloom. Convinced with him of the vanities of life, it is not an ungracious or unsoothing melancholy

which confirms us in our conviction, and points with a steady hand to the divine SOMETHING that awaits us beyond;

> "The darkness aiding intellectual light,
> And sacred silence whispering truths divine,
> And truths divine converting pain to peace."

I know not whether I should say too much of this great poem if I should call it a fit Appendix to the "Paradise Lost." It is the Consolation to that Complaint. Imagine the ages to have rolled by since our first parents gave earth to their offspring, who sealed the gift with blood, and bequeathed it to us with toil:—imagine, after all that experience can teach—after the hoarded wisdom and the increasing pomp of countless generations—an old man, one of that exiled and fallen race, standing among the tombs of his ancestors, telling us their whole history, in his appeals to the living heart, and holding out to us, with trembling hands, the only comfort which Earth has yet discovered for its cares and sores—the anticipation of Heaven! To

me, that picture completes all that Milton began. It sums up the Human History, whose first chapter he had chronicled; it preacheth the great issues of the Fall; it shows that the burning light then breathed into the soul, lives there still; it consummates the mysterious record of our mortal sadness and our everlasting hope. But if the conception of the "Night Thoughts" be great, it is also uniform and sustained. The vast wings of the Inspiration never slacken or grow fatigued. Even the humours and conceits are of a piece with the solemnity of the poem—like the grotesque masks carved on the walls of a Cathedral, which defy the strict laws of taste, and almost inexplicably harmonize with the whole. The sorrow, too, of the poet is not egotistical, or weak in its repining. It is the Great One Sorrow common to all human nature—the deep and wise regret that springs from an intimate knowledge of our being and the scene in which it has been cast. That same knowledge, operating on various minds, produces various results. In Voltaire it sparkled

into wit: in Goëthe, it deepened into a humour that belongs to the sublime; in Young, it generated the same high and profound melancholy as that which excited the inspirations of the Son of Sirach, and the soundest portion of the philosophy of Plato. It is, then, the conception of the poem, and its sustained flight, which entitle it to so high a rank in our literature. Turn from it to any other didactic poem, and you are struck at once by the contrast—you are amazed at once by its greatness. "The Seasons" shrink into a mere pastoral; "The Essay on Man" becomes French and artificial; even the "Excursion" of Wordsworth has, I know not what, of childish and garrulous, the moment they are forced into a comparison with the solemn and stern majesty of the "Night Thoughts."

There is another merit in the "Night Thoughts;" apart from its one great lesson, it abounds in a thousand minor ones. Forget its conception—open it at random, and its reflections, its thoughts, its worldly wisdom alone

excels the one before us.
what rich redundance !
graces of expression wit
sown are full of all the less
How beautiful, in mere d
to the flowers :—

> "Queen lilies, and ye paint
> Who dwell in fields and le

So, too, how expressive the

> "——————like our sha
> Our wishes lengthen as our

What—but here I must pa
should go on for ever; for the
strikes the superficial even

sessed; and, in spite of all things, it continued with him to the last. His love of ambition, perhaps deepened, in his wiser moments, his contempt of the world: for we are generally disappointed before we despise. But the purer source of his inspiration seems to have been solemnly and fervently felt throughout life. At college, he was distinguished for his successful zeal in opposing the unbelief of Tindal. In literature, some of his earliest offerings were laid upon the altar of God. In the pulpit, where he was usually a powerful and victorious preacher, he is recorded once to have burst into tears on seeing that he could not breathe his own intense emotion into the hearts of a worldly audience. Naturally vain, he renounced the drama, in which he had gained so great a reputation, when he entered the church ; and though called covetous, he gave—when his play of " The Brothers " was acted, not the real proceeds of the play, (for it was not successful,) but what he had imagined might be the proceeds—(a thousand pounds,) to the propagation of the Gospel

abroad. A religious vein distinguished his private conversation in health and manhood, no less than his reflections in sorrow, and his thoughts at the approach of death. May we hope with him that the cravings of his heart were the proof of an Hereafter—

> "That grief is but our grandeur in disguise,
> And discontent is immortality."

While we admire his genius, let us benefit from his wisdom; while we bow in homage before the spirit that "stole the music from the spheres to soothe their goddess;" while we behold aghast the dread portrait he has drawn of Death, noting from his grim and secret stand the follies of a wild and revelling horde of bacchanals; while we shudder with him when he conjures up the arch fiend from his lair; while we stand awed and breathless beneath his adjuration to Night,

> "Nature's great ancestor, Day's elder born,
> And fated to survive the transient sun;"

let us always come back at last to his serene and holy consolation:—

"Through many a field of moral and divine
The muse has strayed, and much of sorrow seen
In human ways, and much of false and vain,
Which none who travel this bad road can miss;
O'er friends deceased full heartily she wept,
Of love divine the wonders she displayed;
Proved man immortal; showed the source of joy;
The grand tribunal raised; assigned the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral muse has shadowed out a sketch
Of most our weakness needs believe, or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies."'

I have given the substance—and, as far as I could remember, the words of my friend's remarks—the last conversation I ever held with him on his favourite poet—and although the reader, attached to more worldly literature, may not agree with L—— as to the high and settled rank in which the poem thus criticised should be placed—I do not think he will be displeased to have had his attention drawn for a few moments towards one, at least, among the highest, but not the most popular, of his country's poets. And as for the rest—it is not perhaps amiss

to refresh ever and anon our critical suscep-tibilities to genius—its defects and its beau-ties, by recurring to those departed writers, who—being past the reach of our petty jea-lousies—may keep us as it were, in the custom to praise without envy, and blame without in-justice. And I must confess, moreover—that it appears to me a sort of duty we owe to the illus-trious dead—to turn at times from the busier and more urgent pursuits of the world—and to water from a liberal urn the flowers or the laurels which former gratitude planted around their tombs.

CONVERSATION THE NINTH.

THE MEMORY BECOMES MORE ACUTE AS WE APPROACH DEATH—L——'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE SAYING THAT 'LIFE IS A JEST'—THE VANITY OF AMBITION—OUR ERRORS ARISE FROM OUR DESIRE TO BE GREATER THAN WE ARE—THOUGHTS ON SUPERSTITION—THE EARLY ASTROLOGERS—PHILANTHROPY—THE FEAR OF ASSISTING IN CHANGES OF WHICH THE GOOD TO A FUTURE GENERATION MAY NOT COMPENSATE THE EVIL TO THE PRESENT—CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TRANQUIL LIVES OF MEN OF GENIUS AND THE REVOLUTIONS THEIR WORKS EFFECT—THE HOPE OF INTERCOURSE WITH GREAT MINDS IN A FUTURE STATE—THE SANCTITY OF THE GRAVE—THE PHÆDO OF PLATO—THE PICTURE OF THE LAST MOMENTS OF SOCRATES—THE UNSATISFACTORY ARGUMENTS OF THE HEATHEN FOR THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL—REVEALED RELIGION HAS LED MEN MORE LOGICALLY TO THE ARGUMENTS FOR NATURAL THEOLOGY—DISBELIEF INVOLVES US IN GREATER DIFFICULTIES THAN FAITH—OUR DOUBTS DO NOT DISHEARTEN US IF WE ONCE BELIEVE IN GOD—L——'S LAST HOURS—HIS FAREWELL TO NATURE—HIS DEATH.

THE day was calm and cloudless as, towards the end of August, I rode leisurely to L——'s solitary house; his strength had so materially declined

during the few days past, that I felt a gloomy presentiment that I was about to see him for the last time. He had always resolved, and I believe this is not uncommon with persons in his disease, not to take to his bed until absolutely compelled. His habitual amusements, few and tranquil, were such that he could happily continue them to the last, and his powers of conversation, naturally so rich and various, were not diminished by the approach of death; perhaps they were only rendered more impressive by the lowered tones of the sweetest of human voices, or the occasional cough that mingled his theories on this world with a warning of the next. I have observed that as in old people the memory usually becomes the strongest of the faculties,* so it also does with those whom mortal sickness, equally with age, detaches from the

* That is, properly speaking, the memory so far as it embraces early acquisitions or transactions—old people remember what happened fifty years ago, and forget what happened yesterday. Their souls have gone back to youth as the fitting port for the voyage to Immortality.

lengthened prospects of the future. Forbidden the objects from without, the mind turns within for its occupation, and the thoughts, formerly impelled towards hope, nourish themselves on retrospection. Once I had not noted in L—— that extraordinary strength of memory—the ready copiousness of its stores—that he now seemed to display. His imagination had been more perceptible than his learning—*now*, every subject on which we conversed elicited hoards of knowledge, always extensive and often minute—of which perhaps he himself had been previously unconscious. It is a beautiful sight, even in the midst of its melancholy, the gradual passing away of one of the better order of souls—the passions lulled as the mind awakens, and a thousand graces of fortitude and gentleness called forth by the infirmities of the declining frame. The character assumes a more intellectual, a more ethereal complexion; and our love is made a loftier quality by our admiration, while it is softened by our pity.

Full of these reflections I arrived at the house

of my dying friend. "My master, sir," said the old servant, "has passed but a poor night, he seems in low spirits this morning, and I think he will be glad to see you, for he has inquired repeatedly what o'clock it was, as if time passed heavily with him." The old man wiped his eyes as he spoke, and I followed him into L——'s study. The countenance of the invalid was greatly changed even since I last saw him. The eyes seemed more sunken, and the usual flush of his complaint had subsided into a deep but transparent paleness. I took his hand, and he shook his head gently as I did so. "The goal is nearly won!" said he faintly, but with a slight smile. I did not answer, and he proceeded after a short pause—"It has been said that 'life is a jest;' it is a very sorry one, and like bad jests in general, its dullness is the greater as we get to the close. At the end of a long illness it is only the dregs of a man's spirit that are left him. People talk of the moral pangs that attend the death-bed of a sinner—as well might they talk of the physical weakness of a

dying wrestler. The mental and the physical powers are too nearly allied for us fairly to speculate on the fidelity of the one while the other declines. Happy in my case that the endurance if not the elasticity of my mind lingers with me to the last! I was looking over some papers this morning which were full of my early visions, aspirations of fame, and longings after earthly immortality. I am fortunate that time is not allowed me to sacrifice happiness to these phantoms. A man's heart must be very frivolous if the possession of fame rewards the labour to attain it. For the worst of reputation is that it is not palpable or present —we do not feel, or see, or taste it. People praise us behind our backs, but we hear them not; few before our faces, and who is not suspicious of the truth of such praise? What *does* come before us perpetually in our career of honours is the blame, not praise—the envy, not esteem. We ask the disciple and we find the persecutor."

"Ay," said I, "but after a little while the

great man learns to despise the abuse which is not acknowledged to be just."

"In proportion as *he despises blame*," answered L——, "*he will despise praise*—if the one give no pain, the other will give no pleasure; and thus the hunt after honours will be but a life of toil without a reward, and entail the apathy of obscurity without its content."

A. "But consider, there is the reward of our own heart which none can take away—our proud self-esteem, and, if you will, our fond appeal to the justice of an after-age."

L. "But our self-esteem—our self-applause may be equally, perhaps more securely, won in obscurity than in fame; and as to posterity, what philosophical, what moderately wise man can seriously find pleasure for the present in reflecting on the praises he can never hear? No, say what we will, you may be sure that ambition is an error:—its wear and tear of heart are never recompensed—it steals away the freshness of life—it deadens its vivid and social enjoyments—it shuts our soul to our own youth—

and we are old ere we find that we have made a fever and a labour of our raciest years. There is, and we cannot deny it, a certain weary, stale, unprofitable flatness in all things appertaining to life; and what is worse, the more we endeavour to lift ourselves from the beaten level, the keener is our disappointment. It is thus that true philosophers have done wisely when they have told us to cultivate our reason rather than our feelings—for reason reconciles us to the daily things of existence—our feelings teach us to yearn after the Far, the Difficult, the Unseen,

> 'Clothing the palpable and the familiar
> With golden exhalations from the dawn.'

But 'the golden exhalations' vanish as noon advances;—our fancies are the opium of our life, the rapture and the vision—the languor and the anguish. But what, when we come deeply to consider of it—what a singular fatality is that which makes it unwise to cultivate our divinest emotions! We bear within

us the seeds of greatness; but suffer them to spring up, and they overshadow both our sense and our happiness! Note the errors of mankind; how mysteriously have they arisen from the desire to be higher than we are. As the banyan tree soars aloft only to return to the mire—we would climb to the heaven, and find ourselves once more in the dust. Thus, looking up to the starred and solemn heavens, girt with the vast solitudes of unpeopled Nature—hearkening to the 'live thunder,' or suffering the mighty winds to fill their hearts with a thousand mysterious voices—mankind in the early time felt the inspiration of something above them: they bowed to the dark *afflatus*; they nourished the unearthly dream; and they produced—what?—SUPERSTITION! The darkest and foulest of moral Demons sprang from their desire to shape forth a God, and their successors made earth a Hell by their efforts to preserve the mysteries and repeat the commands of Heaven!

"How beautiful, how high were those desires in man's heart which lifted it up to the old

Chaldæan falsehoods of Astrology. Who can read at this day of those ancient seers, striving to win from the loveliest and most glorious objects given to our survey, the secrets of empires, the prodigies of Time, the destinies of the Universe, without a solemn and kindling awe, an admiration at the vast conception even of so unwise a dream? Who first thought of conning the great page of Heaven?—who first thought that in those still, and cold, and melancholy orbs—our chronicles were writ? Whoever it was, his must have been a daring and unearthly soul; but the very loftiness of its faculties produced ages of delusion, and priestcraft, and error to the world. Leave for one moment the chain of the petty KNOWN—give wings to the mind—let the Aspiring loose—and what may be the result? How rarely gain!—how rarely aught but a splendid folly! As the fireworks that children send forth against a dark sky—our ambition burns, and mounts, and illumes for one moment the dim vault of the uncomprehended space, but falls to the earth spoiled of its

lustre—brilliant, but useless—ascending, but exploring not—a toy to all, but a light to none."

"There is one ambition," said I, "which you do not mean thus to characterise—the ambition of philanthropy—the desire more

'To raise the wretched than to rise;'

and you, I know, who believe in human perfectibility, can appreciate at its proper value that order of ambition."

"You kindly remind me," said L——, "of one of the greatest consolations with which a man, who has any warmth or benevolence of heart, can depart this world—the persuasion that he leaves his species gradually progressing towards that full virtue and generalized happiness which his noblest ambition could desire for them. Night, according to the old Egyptian creed, is the dark mother of all things; as ages leave her, they approach the light. That which the superficial dread, is in reality the Vivifier of the World—I mean the everlasting Spirit of

Change. And, figuring forth unconsciously to themselves this truth, the Egyptians, we are told by Porphyry, represented their demons as floating upon the waters—for ever restless and evoking the great series of Mutabilities. Yet who lightly cares to take upon himself the fearful responsibility of shaking the throned Opinions of his generation, knowing that centuries may pass before the good that is worked shall compensate for the evil done? This fear, this timidity of conscience it is, that makes us cowards to the Present, and leaves the great souls that should lead on Reform inert and sluggish, while the smaller spirits, the journeymen of Time, just creep up inch by inch to what Necessity demands, leaving the world ages and ages behind that far goal which the few, in heart, and eye, and speculation, have already reached."

A. One of the strange things that happen daily is this—men who the most stir the lives of others—lead themselves the most silent and balanced life. It is curious to read how Kant, who set the mind of Germany on fire with the

dim light of mysticism, himself lived on from day to day, the mere creature of his habits, and performing somewhat of the operations of the horologe, that in its calm regularity, leads the blind million—to portion out in new and wild dreams the short span of existence. So with philosophers, and poets geneally—how wonderful the contrast between the quiet of their existence and the turbid effects they produce! This, perhaps secretly to ourselves, makes the great charm in visiting the tranquil and still retreats from whence the oracles of the world have issued—the hermitage of Ermenonville—the fortress of Wartenburg; the one where Rousseau fed his immortal fancies—the other whence burst, from the fiery soul of Luther, the light that yet lives along the world:—what reflections must the silence and the mouldering stone awaken, as we remember the vivid and overflowing hearts of the old inhabitants! Plato and his Cave are, to all ages, the type and prophecy of the Philosopher and his Life.

L. Few, my friend, think of all the lofty and

divine hopes that the belief in immortality opens to us. One of the purest of these is the expectation of a more entire intelligence—of the great gift of conversing with all who have lived before us—of questioning the past ages and unravelling their dark wisdom. How much in every man's heart dies away unuttered! How little of what the sage knows does the sage promulgate! How many chords of the lyre within the poet's heart, have been dumb to the world's ear! All this untold, uncommunicated, undreamt-of store of wisdom and of harmony, it may be the privilege of our immortality to learn. The best part of genius, the world often knows not—the Plato buries much of his lore within his Cave—and this, the High Unknown, is our heritage. "With these thoughts," continued L——, "you see how easy it is for the parting soul to beautify and adorn Death! With how many garlands we can hang the tomb! Nay, if we begin betimes, we can learn to make the prospect of the grave the most seductive of human visions—by little and little we wean from

its contemplation all that is gloomy and abhorrent—by little and little we hive therein all the most pleasing of our dreams. As the neglected genius whispers to his muse, 'Posterity shall know thee, and *thou* shalt live when I am no more,' we find in this hallowed and all-promising future, a recompence for every mortification, for every disappointment in the present. It is the belief of the Arabs, that to the earliest places of human worship there clings a guardian sanctity—there the wild bird rests not, there the wild beast may not wander; it is the blessed spot on which the eye of God dwells, and which man's best memories preserve. As with the earliest place of worship, so is it with the latest haven of repose—as with the spot where our first imperfect adoration was offered up, our first glimpses of divinity indulged, so should it be with that where our full knowledge of the Arch-Cause begins, and we can pour forth a gratitude no longer checked and darkened by the troubles and cares of earth. Surely if any spot in the world be sacred, it is that small green mound in which

grief ceases, and from which, if the harmonies of creation, if the voice within our hearts, if the impulse which makes man so easy a believer in revelation,—if these mock and fool us not with an everlasting lie, we spring up on the untiring wings of a pangless and seraphic life—those whom we loved, around us; the aspirings that we nursed, fulfilled; our nature, universal intelligence; our atmosphere, eternal love!"

Sometime afterwards, observing a volume of Plato on the table, our conversation fell upon that divine philosopher, and on his dialogue of the Phædo in particular.

"Of all the Dialogues of Plato," said L——, "the Phædo has been perhaps the most read, and may be considered the most interesting. It is the most interesting partly from its accurate account of the last hours of Socrates, and partly from the absorbing curiosity which we entertain to know the opinions of the wisest of the ancients respecting the immortality of the soul. Perhaps there is no part of our studies which bequeaths a more delightful and enduring memory. It lives



too intoxicated to exam
which every separate fea
blended into one dim
Each of Plato's Dialogue
the dramatic—but the Ph
matic of all. It is a pic
sweetness and grandeur,
are distinct and life-like.
disciples, some Athenian, s
ing in the early morning
day by the gates of the
Theseus * having now
crowned with flowers—as
sacrifice and festival. Wit
the magistrates are freein
bonds. There they stand, r

beautifully described—in which grief at his death is mingled with all the sweet and musical consolings inspired by his past converse. The gaoler appears—the door opens—they are with Socrates. The manner in which, after dismissing the loud sorrow of Xantippe, the conversation glides into its glorious topics, is singularly natural and simple. We see Socrates 'sitting upright on his bed,' and moralizing gaily on the relief from his fetters—till one thought begetting another, he comes to his celebrated explanation of the causes why one 'who has rightly studied philosophy should be bold when about to die.' The little incidental and graphic touches with which, here and there, Plato breaks the dialogue, render it peculiarly living and effective; and the individuality of Socrates, in that mixture of easy gaiety and lofty thought, which divides his listeners between weeping and laughter—that patient confidence with which he is wont to hear objections—and the art with which he draws on the speaker to answer himself, make the character

as distinctly and appropriately marked a character as in one of Shakspeare's plays. The utter want of any rhetorical attempt to move an unworthy compassion—the plain and homely simplicity with which the whole tragedy is told from the time, when stroking the limb which the fetters had galled, he observes smilingly how the painful had been supplied by pleasurable sensations—or his caressingly touching the long hair of the supposed narrator, who sate on a low stool beside him—to the close, when, returned from the bath—after embracing for the last time his children, he sits down again amongst his friends, and 'did not speak much afterwards:' 'and it was now near the setting of the sun;'* the weeping servant of the magistrate, coming to bid him farewell—the request of

* "How watched his better sons the farewell ray,
That closed their murdered sage's latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill,
The precious hour of parting lingers still," &c.

It is a pity that Byron injured the whole of this beautiful allusion by the epithet in the following line—

Socrates to bid them bring the poison—the answer of Crito, 'Nay, the sun yet lingers on the mountains'—the undaunted gaze of Socrates on the countenance of his executioner (so untranslateably expressed in the word ταυρηδὸν) as he took the fatal draught;—the sudden burst of sorrow from his disciples, which a few words from the dying man causes them to blush for;—the melancholy walk to and fro that narrow cell, for the better operation of the poison—the homely expression, and 'when he felt his limbs grow heavy, he laid himself down'—to die;—the portrait of the executioner pressing his foot strongly and asking if he felt the pressure, of which, alas! he was unconscious;—the gradual progress of the numbing potion—from the feet to the nobler parts, as Socrates himself points

" But sad his light to *agonising* eyes."

There was no agony in the tears that his pupils wept for Socrates. " The sadness was," as Plato says, "not wholly unpleasing." The death of a man thoroughly great and good does not allow the terror and the prostration of agony.

out to those around his bed, how the limbs stiffen and grow cold—adding, in that phrase of unconscious pathos, 'When it reaches *my heart* I shall leave you;'—that last and mystic command (which the later Platonists have endeavoured to explain as an emblematic desire of purification and healing) to sacrifice to Æsculapius;—the inquiry of Crito, 'Hast thou no other bidding?'—the quiet sorrow of what follows—'To this he made no reply, but after he had been a short time still, he moved, and the man covered him, and his eyes grew fixed. And Crito perceived it, and closed his eyes and mouth.—This, Echecrates, was the end of our companion;'—the whole of this picture is, I say, so great a masterpiece of truth and tenderness—the presentation of so sublime a spectacle, that in itself it would render the Phædo one of the most valuable of the possessions we derive from the Golden Past. But how much more thrilling and divine it becomes, when this, the last scene of such a life, is coloured with all the hopes and auguries of the departing soul—when the

cessation from this world is smoothed away by august conjectures on the world to be—and the Sage lavishes his wisdom on the glorious aphorism that to die is to bé immortal!

We do not wish to disturb the thoughts which this Dialogue bequeaths us, by criticising the details—we would rather number its recollection amongst our feelings than submit it coldly to the test of our reasonings. Alas! if we do the latter, the effect begins gloomily to fade away. For I must own that, amidst all the poetry of the allusions—amidst all the ingenuity of the arguments—I feel, when I fix the mind rather than the imagination or the heart upon the conclusions of the Great Heathen, that they fail to convince. Almost every argument he uses for the immortality of man is equally applicable to the humblest of the brutes—the least visible of the animalculæ in a drop of water. Such, for instance, as this, which is the least obscure, perhaps, of all his propositions, and which, nevertheless, is almost a scholastic frivolity. 'A contrary cannot receive a contrary, nor the



contrary of life? Death.
receive the contrary of wh
cannot therefore receive dea
call that which does not rec
tal.' Such is one among th
arguments of the wisest of
we wonder when we are told
Plato made but few convert
immortality of the soul? A
and the fly at the window, th
watching it—nay, the very
us green and living, have
that which introduces life,
the contrary to that which
soul is therefore immortal as

ists and ourselves. What can be so bewildering as the more subtle refinements about 'harmony,' and 'parity,' and the previous existence of the soul—on which last however the Sage's arguments are less vague than they are with respect to its existence hereafter, and which yet, if true, would destroy the whole blessing of Immortality—for if the soul has existed before it entered our body—and if our seeming acquisitions are rather dim reminiscences of what we knew before—if, as the intoxicating poetry of the Platonists has supposed, the delight that follows upon our discovery of a truth is nothing more than the recognition—the re-finding as it were something formerly familiar and allied to us—where is that perfect identity which can alone render a new existence a blessing that we ourselves can feel? What comfort is it to me to think that my soul may live again under other shapes—but *I*—my sentient faculty—my memory and my perception, not feel the renewed existence? This would not be a continuance of myself, but a lapse into another as distinct from myself—as Socrates from Newton. No—there

is nothing in the Phædo that could convince a modern unbeliever; but there is every thing that can charm and delight one who already believes—who desires only to embellish his belief with beautiful thoughts,*—and who from the

* One source of great interest in the Phædo, as indeed in all the writings of Plato, is to trace the germs of modern articles of philosophic or christian faith in the theories it creates. For instance, Reid's assertion of the inherent disposition to Truth or "instinctive prescience of human actions which makes us rely on the testimony of our fellow creatures" has been preceded by the Phædo—though the remark is intended to apply to the pre-existence of the soul:* and the fantastic notion that learning is but reminiscence—"The truth of this," says Cebes, "is manifested by a most beautiful argument. Men, when interrogated properly, will speak of every thing just as it is—could they do this unless science and right reason resided (or were inherent) in them?" In another part of Phædo you may trace the outline of the Catholic purgatory—though an earlier origin for that belief is perhaps to be found in the mysteries borrowed from Egypt.

* A doctrine as old, at least, as Pherecydes, who, first of the Greeks, taught that the soul pre-existed from eternity—Socrates taught little or nothing that was absolutely new. Alas! who has?

Pisgah of his conviction looks down on those who have strayed, erring but with faith, over the glimmering and uncertain wastes of the past Desert. All our later upholders of Natural Religion have, even to the sceptics in Revealed, been more successful in their reasonings than this lofty Ancient. It has been among the peculiar blessings of Revealed Religion that it has led men more logically and deliberately to the arguments for Natural Theology. Its very enemies have, in dissenting from its principles, confirmed its most grand conclusions. It made the eternity of the soul a grave and settled doctrine which scholars could not bandy about according to their fantasies. It attracted the solemn attention of sages to all the arguments for and against it. And out of a thousand disputes have proceeded the reasonings upon which it has found its basis. When Christ said, 'I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD,' he uttered one of the sublimest of his prophecies. His faith has called forth the countless luminaries of Truth; not only the Reformers, who



Thought—they penetrated land
since converted—they discover
regions of Uncertainty since
Truths: and Darkness has prod
and constellations, as Night aw
Instead of checking Philosophy,
it yet more searching and severe.
indeed remain which our under
solve—if the origin of evil yet per
us—if we cannot guess how the
why departs—nor know the secr
mony of the lyre;' *—we can stil
the resting-places we have gainec
our ignorance to be the judge l
to become the witness.—Satisfie
has its enigmas, Disbelief is yet

dazzle of the sun, we may trust yet that He who gifted it with its wings, may hereafter increase its strength, and guide its wanderings, and enable it to face the intolerable lustre which now blinds its gaze. Once convinced that there is a God, and we annihilate Despair!—we may still have our doubtings and our desires—our sorrows and our cares—but it is enough to know that we are destined to survive them. And when we are weary of our vain wanderings, we remember that Thought can find its home with God—and that it is on a Father's bosom that we hush ourselves to rest!"

In discourses of this sort, the day wore to its close, and when will the remembrance of that day ever depart from me! It seemed to me, as we sat by the window, the sun sinking through the still summer air, the leaves at rest, but how full of life, the motes dancing in the beam, the birds with their hymns of love, and every now and then the chirp of the grasshopper—

> "That evening reveller who makes
> His life an infancy and sings his fill;"—

it seemed to me, as we so sat, and, looking upon the hushed face of our mother Nature, I listened to the accents of that wild and impassioned wisdom, so full of high conjecture and burning vision, and golden illustration, which belonged to him for whom life was closing, as if I could have fancied that the world was younger by some two thousand years, and that it was not one of this trite and dull age's children that was taking his farewell of life, but rather one of the enthusiasts of that day when knowledge was both a passion and a dream, when the mysteries of the universe and the life-to-come were thought the most alluring of human themes, and when in the beautiful climates of the West, the sons of wisdom crept out to die, among the trees they had peopled with divinities, and yielded their own spirits to the Great Soul of which they were a part, and which their mysterious faith had made the Life and Ruler of the world.* For I

* But Phornutus, by Jupiter, understands the Soul of the world, he writing thus concerning him, ὥσπερ δὲ ἡμεῖς, &c. "As we ourselves are governed by a soul,

think, nay, I feel assured, that those, the high sons of the past philosophy, have neither in their conduct nor their manner of thought been fully appreciated by the posterity that treads lightly over the dust of what once was life. They wandered wildly, but their wanderings were 'not of the earth, earthy;' and they possessed more of that power, and beauty, and majesty, and aspiration, which *are* the soul; they had less of the body and more of the spirit, than many of the mitred Priests who have railed against the earthliness ot Paganism, from the cherubic paradise of Tithes.

And now the sun sank, and

> 'Maro's shepherd star
> Watched the soft silence with a loving eye,' *

"Do you remember," said L——, "a story in one of the old English Chronicles, how a

so hath the world, in like manner, a soul that containeth it, and this is called Zeus, being the cause of life to all things that live," &c.—*Cudworth*, vol. i. p. 529.

* Milton, a poem, by the Author.

bird flew into the King's chamber, when the King was conversing with some sage upon the nature of the soul? 'Behold!' said the sage, it is like that bird while within this room; you can note its flight and motions, but you know not whence it came ere it entered, nor can ye guess whither it shall fly when it leaves this momentary lodging.'"

It chanced, somewhat curiously, that, as L—— spoke, a small bird—I know not of what name or tribe—suddenly alighted on the turf beneath the window, and though all its fellow-songsters were already hushed, poured forth a long, loud, sweet lay, that came, in the general silence, almost startlingly on the ear. "Poor bird!" said L——, musingly, "it is thy farewell to one who, perhaps, has given thee food for thy little ones, and whose hand is well-nigh closed. And," continued he, after a short pause—and lifting up his eyes, he gazed long and earnestly around the scene, now bathed in all the darkening but tender hues of the summer night—"and shall I be ungrateful to that Power which has, since

my boyhood, fed my thoughts—the wanderers of the heart—have *I* no farewell for that Nature whom, perhaps, I behold for the last time? O, unseen Spirit of Creation! that watchest over all things—the desert and the rock, no less than the fresh water bounding on like a hunter on his path, when his heart is in his step—or the valley girded by the glad woods, and living with the yellow corn—to me, thus sad and baffled, thou hast ministered as to the happiest of thy children!—thou hast whispered tidings of unutterable comfort to a heart which the World sated while it deceived! Thou gavest me a music, sweeter than that of palaces, in the mountain wind!—thou badest the flowers and the common grass smile up to me as children to the face of their father!—Like the eye of a woman first loved to the soul of the poet, was the face of every soft and never-silent star to me! Nature! my mother Nature! as the infant in the harsh slavery of schools pines for home, I yearned within the dark walls of cities, and amidst the hum of unfamiliar men, for thy

sweet embrace—and thy bosom whereon to lay my head, and weep wild tears at my will! I thank thee, Nature, that thou art round and with me to the last! Not in the close thoroughfares of toil and traffic—not tethered to a couch, whence my eyes asking for thee, would behold only those dim walls which are the dying man's worst dungeon, or catch through the lattice the busy signs and crowded tenements of the unsympathizing herd—not *thus* shall my last sigh be rendered up to the Great Fount of Life! To the mystic moment when the breath flutters and departs, thy presence will be round me, and the sentiment of thy freedom bathe my soul like a fresh air! Farewell thou, and thy thousand ministrants and children!—every leaf that quivers on the bough—every dew-drop that sparkles from the grass—every breeze that animates the veins of earth, are as friends, that I would rather feel around my death-bed than the hollow hearts and ungenial sympathies of my kind! O Nature, farewell! if we are re-united, can I feel in a future being thy power, and thy

beauty, and thy presence, more intensely than I have done in this?"

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When I was about to take leave of L—— for the night, he asked me, in a meaning voice, to stay with him a little longer: "The fact is," said he, "that Dr. —— implies a doubt whether I shall see another day; so be with me, at least till I fall asleep. I mean," added he, smiling, "not in the metaphoric, but the literal sense of the word."

Accordingly, when he retired for the night, I sat by his bedside, and we continued to converse, for he wished it, though but by fits and starts: he gave me several instructions as to his burial, and as to various little bequests, not mentioned in his formal testament. While indifferent to the companionship of men, he had never been ungrateful for their affection: the least kindness affected him sensibly, and he was willing in death to show that he had not forgotten it. In-



favours—true that the same pr
ation occurs in respect to pett
considerate slights. The Hea
the independence of the Mind.

Before the window, which loo
garden, the dark tops of the tree
fully to and fro; and above, in
the sky, utterly cloudless, and
stars. "My eyes are very heav
"close the curtains round my
so, and crept softly into the ne
the Nurse sate dozing in a large
side.

"Does he sleep, sir?" said
as I approached.

"He will shortly," said I: "I

Yes! this is the world's notion. With what wondrous ingenuity they shift off the pain of regret! A friend, a brother, a husband, nay a son dies—they thank God he is out of his afflictions! In one sense they are right. They make the best of their own short summer, and do not ask the cloud to stay longer than sufficient to call up the flowers or refresh the soil. Yet, this is a narrow view of the subject of death. A bright genius disappears—a warm heart is stilled, and we think only (when we console ourselves) of the escape of the individual from his bed of pain. But ought we not to think of the loss that the world—that our whole race sustains? I believe so. How many thoughts which might have preached conviction to the universe will be stricken for ever dumb by the early death of one being! What services to earth might the high purity, the deep knowledge, the ardent spirit of L—— have effected! But this we never think of. "Poor gentleman!" quoth the Nurse, "he will soon be out of his sufferings!" and therewith she took a huge pinch of snuff.—My God! what self-comforters we are!



at the foot of the bed, as usual ?
he lies there, sir, as still as a mo
them creturs know when we a
Ah ! sir, how the dog will take
and the Nurse, breaking off, appli
snuff-box.

I did not feel at home in this
and I soon stole again into the ne
a stillness there was in it ! It se
Stillness is not silent, at least to
walked straight up to the bed. L—
flung over the pillow. I felt it ger
was almost imperceptibly low—b
nevertheless. I was about to d
when L—— half turned round,
gently pressed my own. I heard

the lips. But those lips had fallen from each other! I pressed the pulse again. No—the fluttering was gone. I started away with an unutterable tightness at my heart. I moved to the door, and called (but under my breath) to the Nurse. She came quickly; yet I thought an hour had passed before she crossed the threshold. We went once more to the bed—and there, by his master's face, sat the poor dog. He had crept softly up from his usual resting-place; and when he saw us draw aside the curtain, he looked at us so wistfully, that—no, I cannot go on!—There is a religion in a good man's death that we cannot babble to all the world!

THE END.

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